Dec. 30, 1985

THE NEW YORKER

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

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THE THEATRE

(This week and next, some theatres, as indicated below, are rearranging their schedules because of Christmas and New Year's Day. There may be further changes, so it would be wise to check with the newspapers before making plans.)

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

As Is—This touching play by William M. Hoffman concerns a personable young homosexual who is afflicted with AIDS, and is also a documentary of sorts about his milieu in this city. The lively, impressionistic performance was directed by Marshall W. Mason, and the acting by the large cast, several of whom appear in multiple roles, is just right. With Jonathan Hogan and Jonathan Hadary. (Reviewed in our issue of 3/25/85.) (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Weeknights at 8 and Sundays at 7. Matinées Wednesdays, except New Year's Day, and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée New Year's Day at 3. Closes Saturday, Jan. 4.)

Aunt Dan & Lemon—A debate on the nature of good and evil, by Wallace Shawn, acted to perfection by Kathryn Pogson, Linda Hunt, Linda Bassett, Lynsey Baxter, and the author himself. The director is Max Stafford-Clark. (11/4/85) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. No performances Wednesday through Friday, Dec. 25-27.)

Benefactors—Sam Waterston, Glenn Close, Mary Beth Hurt, and Simon Jones in Michael Frayn's four-character play, imported from London. Staged by Michael Blakemore. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Christmas, and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Friday, Dec. 27, at 3.)

Big River—A musical version of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn." Twain's great novel has been respectfully dealt with in a book by William Hauptman, with music and lyrics by Roger Miller. Daniel H. Jenkins plays Huck, Ron Richardson plays Jim, and Clint Allen plays Tom. Heidi Landesman has provided an unusually evocative setting—somehow, she has managed to put the Mississippi River on a stage. (5/13/85) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Christmas, and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Friday, Dec. 27, at 2.)

Biloxi Blues—A comedy that verges on autohagiography, the hero being the author, Neil Simon, as a young Army draftee who, in 1943, is struggling to assume the mantle of writer. (4/8/85) (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 757-8646. Nightly, except Sundays, New Year's Day, and Thursday, Jan. 2, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2; special matinées Friday, Dec. 27, Sunday and Monday, Dec. 29-30, and New Year's Day, all at 3.)

Blood Knot—After a quarter of a century, Athol Fugard's play about the anguish of black life in South Africa has become a classic. This production, starring Fugard and Zakes Mokae and directed by Fugard, is unlikely ever to be surpassed. (12/23/85) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except New Year's Day, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Special performances Friday, Dec. 27, at 3, and Monday, Dec. 30, at 3 and 8.)

Circle Repertory Company—Nancy Donohue's romantic comedy, **the beach house**, which is sometimes amusing, sometimes just silly, seems to belong more to the late thirties than to the present. Its flaws are more than redeemed by the beguiling performance of Swoosie Kurtz as Her, by the splendid performance of George Grizzard as Him, and by the touching performance of Robert Leonard as his fifteen-year-old son. Melvin Bernhardt was the deft director. (Reviewed in this issue.) (99 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 924-7100. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Christmas, at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

Curse of the Starving Class—A revival of Sam Shepard's brilliant, humorous, passionate play. (9/2/85) (890 Theatre, Broadway at 19th St. 533-8834. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Christmas, at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3; special matinée Thursday, Dec. 26, at 2:30.)

Dames at Sea—A revival of a musical by Jim Wise (score) and George Haimsohn and Robin Miller (book and lyrics). (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Thursday, Dec. 26, at 3 and 8; Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 2 and 8; Sunday, Dec. 29, at 3 and 7; Monday, Dec. 30, at 8; New Year's Eve at 7; and Thursday Jan. 2, at 8.)

Doubles—The scene is a locker room in a tenni club in Connecticut, where four men undres and dress and undress while they talk ove their more or less miserable lives. This is a comedy. The author is David Wiltse, and the four men are played by Keir Dullea, Clif Gorman, Robert Reed, and Charles Repole (5/20/85) (Ritz, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022 Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinée Wednesdays, except Christmas, and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Friday, Dec. 27.)

Festival of One-Act Comedies—The Manhattan Punch Line presentation of two programs o five one-act plays each, running in repertory Program A: Thursday and Friday, Dec. 26-27, at 8; Saturday, Dec. 28, at 3; and Sunday through Tuesday, Dec. 29-31, and Saturday Jan. 4, at 8. . . . ¶ Program B: Saturday, Dec 28, at 8; Sunday, Dec. 29, at 3; Thursday and Friday, Jan. 2-3, at 8; and Saturday Jan. 4, at 3. (Intar, 410 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Through Sunday, Jan. 5.)

The Golden Land—An extremely sentimenta musical about Jewish immigrants to the United States. The company of three men and three women includes a fine singer named Marc Krause. (12/2/85) (Second Avenue Theatre, 189 Second Ave., at 12th St 674-1460. Wednesdays through Saturdays at

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8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2:30, and Sundays at 1 and 5. Special performance New Year's Eve at 8.)

HAY FEVER—It is hard to imagine a more delightful production of Noël Coward's youthful comedy about a flirtatious actress in her middle years and the family with which she has more or less absent-mindedly surrounded herself. Rosemary Harris heads a superlative cast, directed by Brian Murray. (12/23/85) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, New Year's Day, and Thursday, Jan. 2, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2; special matinées Friday, Dec. 27, Sunday and Monday, Dec. 29-30, and New Year's Day, all at 3.)

I HAVE A DREAM—A new production of the Josh Greenfeld play, adapted from the writings of Martin Luther King, Jr. With music. (Henry Street Settlement's New Federal Theatre, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Thursdays through Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Jan. 12.)

I'M NOT RAPPAPORT—Herb Gardner's synthetic, though often entertaining, comedy about two old men who share a bench in Central Park is given an expert performance by Cleavon Little and Judd Hirsch. (6/17/85) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Thursday, Jan. 2, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays—except Christmas—and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Special performances Friday, Dec. 27, at 3, and Monday, Dec. 30, at 8.)

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST—A revival of the 1895 Oscar Wilde comedy. With Dina Merrill. (Samuel Beckett, 412 W. 42nd St. 594-2826. Thursdays at 8; Friday, Dec. 27, at 3 and 8; Saturdays at 2:30 and 8; Sunday, Dec. 29, at 3; and Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 30-31, and Friday, Jan. 3, at 8.)

IN THE BOOM BOOM ROOM—A newly rewritten version of David Rabe's 1973 play, with Liz McDonald. (South Street Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Wednesdays, except New Year's Day, through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except New Year's Day, and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinées Fridays, Dec. 27 and Jan. 3, at 2.)

IN THE HOUSE OF THE BLUES—A miniature musical in which the able performers, impersonating the great blues singers of the past, sing and dance to the most glorious songs on earth. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Henry Street Settlement's New Federal Theatre, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Thursday through Sunday at 7:30. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Dec. 29.)

JERRY'S GIRLS—A musical revue of show tunes written by Jerry Herman, with Dorothy Loudon, Chita Rivera, and Leslie Uggams. Staged by Larry Alford. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Christmas, and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Friday, Dec. 27, at 2.)

JONIN'—The characters here are members of a fraternity at a black college, who ceaselessly subject one another to merciless pranks and verbal mayhem, beginning to end. The play is abrasive and tough to watch, but there is life in it all the same. Gerard Brown makes his début as dramatist. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

LAMBS THEATRE COMPANY—A return engagement of THE GIFTS OF THE MAGI, a musical adapted from two short stories by O. Henry. Randy Courts composed the music and Mark St. Germain provided the book and lyrics. (Little Theatre at the Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Thursday, Dec. 26, at 3 and 8; Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 2 and 8; Sunday, Dec. 29, at 3 and 8; and Monday, Dec. 30, and Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 1-2, at 8. Closes Sunday, Jan. 5.)

LEMON SKY—A fine revival of Lanford Wilson's play about a man's recollections of the summer he spent, at the age of seventeen, with his father's family in California. Jeff Daniels and Jill Eikenberry (as stepmother) do very well in the leading roles. (12/23/85) (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103. Nightly, except Mondays and Christmas, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2; special matinées Sunday, Dec. 29, at 2, and Monday, Dec. 30, at 3. Closes Sunday, Jan. 12.)

A LIE OF THE MIND—Sam Shepard has devised a masterful comedy in this frightening tale of two Western families bound together by a dreadful marriage. The performances, under Mr. Shepard's direction, are extremely good, especially those by Amanda Plummer, Geraldine Page, Harvey Keitel, and Ann Wedgeworth. (12/16/85) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except New Year's Day, at 8. Matinées Sundays at 2:30. Special performance Monday, Dec. 30, at 8.)

LIGHT OPERA OF MANHATTAN—Presenting two Victor Herbert productions. Through Sunday, Dec. 29: BABES IN TOYLAND. . . . ¶ Starting Friday, Jan. 3: NAUGHTY MARIETTA. (Norman Thomas, 111 E. 33rd St. 532-6180. Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 3:30 and 8; and Sundays at 3:30. Special matinée Friday, Dec. 27, at 3:30.)

MAYOR—A musical based on the best-seller of the same name by Edward I. Koch. With a score and lyrics by Charles Strouse and a book by Warren Leight. (Latin Quarter, Broadway at 48th St. 586-3905. Thursday and Friday, Dec. 26-27, and Saturdays at 2 and 8; Sundays at 3; Monday, Dec. 30, at 8; New Year's Eve at 7; and New Year's Day and Friday, Jan. 3, at 8.)

MIRROR REPERTORY COMPANY—Mason Adams and Tovah Feldshuh in William Saroyan's THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE. The first in a series of three revivals performed in alternating repertory. . . . ¶ The second production, Maxim Gorky's CHILDREN OF THE SUN, with Michael Moriarty and Elizabeth Franz, will preview on Christmas and will open officially on Thursday, Dec. 26, at 6:30. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 5 and Sundays at 3. For information about play scheduling, call 223-6440.)

MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION—Uta Hagen gives a stunning performance, in Shaw's brilliant play, as a woman of lowly origins who has made a fortune from a string of brothels. There is distinguished acting, as well, by Pamela Reed, as her daughter, and Harris Yulin, as her business partner. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays—except Christmas—Saturdays, and Sundays at 2. Special performances Thursday, Dec. 26, at 2, and Sunday, Dec. 29, at 7:30.)

THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD—Charles Dickens died in the midst of writing the novel that has served as a basis for this jolly, silly musical, with charming songs by Rupert Holmes, an excellent cast headed by George Rose, and uninhibited direction by Wilford Leach. (12/16/85) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Thursday, Jan. 2, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3; special matinées Friday, Dec. 27, Monday, Dec. 30, and New Year's Day, all at 3.)

NEGRO ENSEMBLE COMPANY—The American of EYES OF THE AMERICAN is a C.I.A. man who comes to a newly independent island in the West Indies. The role is portrayed by the stalwart Graham Brown, who also doubles as a dictator; the other actors—just as good—are Eugene Lee and Seret Scott. The play, by Samm-Art Williams, is always absorbing but not always clear. (11/11/85) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 3 and Sundays at 2:30; special matinée Thursday, Dec. 26, at 2. Closes Sunday, Jan. 5.)

THE NORMAL HEART—An interminable non-play about the victims of AIDS in the homosexual community of this city. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

NUNSENSE—A musical by Dan Goggin. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Tuesdays through Fridays, except New Year's Day, at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3. Special performances Thursday, Dec. 26, at 3, and Monday, Dec. 30, at 8.)

THE ODD COUPLE—Neil Simon has turned his successful comedy of twenty years ago, which was about a couple of male bachelors, into an unsuccessful comedy about a couple of female bachelors. The cast is headed by Sally Struthers and Brenda Vaccaro. (6/24/85) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except New Year's Day and Thursday, Jan. 2, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Special performances Friday, Dec. 27, at 3; Monday, Dec. 30, at 3 and 8; and New Year's Day at 3.)

ORPHANS—A melodrama, by Lyle Kessler, about two young brothers—one a street thief and pickpocket, the other an apparent dimwit—and an older mobster who takes over their house and their lives. The first act works quite well, the second is merely serviceable, but what really counts is the performance, under the dynamic direction of Gary Sinise. The show is an import from the Steppenwolf Company of Chicago. (5/20/85) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Thursdays, Fridays, and Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 30-31, at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3; special matinée Friday, Dec. 27.)

PENN & TELLER—A sublime combination of conjuring and comedy. Penn Jillette does the talking; Teller is silent. (5/6/85) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Thursdays at 8; Saturdays and Friday, Dec. 27, at 7 and 10; New Year's Eve at 8 and 11; and New Year's Day and Friday, Jan. 3, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 3 and Thursday, Dec. 26, at 2.)

PERSONALS—A jaunty and romantic little revue about people looking for companionship of one sort or another in the classified ads. Talent abounds. Witty book and lyrics and tuneful score; performances by six gifted young actors. (Minetta Lane, 18-22 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000. Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8; Saturdays and Friday, Dec. 27, at 7 and 10; Sundays at 3 and 7; and Friday, Jan. 3, at 8.)

PRAIRIE DU CHIEN and **THE SHAWL**—A double bill by David Mamet. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2.)

THE SEARCH FOR SIGNS OF INTELLIGENT LIFE IN THE UNIVERSE—A show that has nothing whatever to do with its title, which is just as well. It does have Lily Tomlin clowning her merry way through a number of skits by Jane Wagner, many of them very funny. (10/7/85) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Thursdays, except New Year's Day, at 8; Fridays at 7 and 10; and Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Christmas, and Saturdays at 2. Special performances Thursday, Dec. 26, at 3; Monday, Dec. 30, at 8; and New Year's Day at 5.)

SINGIN' IN THE RAIN—What could be more bizarre than an effortful re-creation onstage of what a movie once did with consummate ease and grace? Twyla Tharp has directed and choreographed this sad, enormous oddity. (7/15/85) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-

Eve Olitski

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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6510. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except New Year's Day, and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3. Special performances Thursday, Dec. 26, at 3; Sunday, Dec. 29, at 7:30; and New Year's Day at 3.)

Song and Dance—The only two reasons for going to see this curious mishmash of a show are Bernadette Peters and Christopher d'Amboise, and perhaps those two reasons are enough. (9/30/85) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Christmas, and Saturdays at 2; special matinées Friday, Dec. 27, and Sunday, Dec. 29, at 3.)

What's a Nice Country Like You . . . Doing in a State Like This?—An updated version of the 1973 satirical revue by the original creators, composer Cary Hoffman and lyricist Ira Gasman. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 691-6226. Tuesdays through Fridays, except Christmas and New Year's Eve, at 8; Saturdays and New Year's Eve at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3; special matinée Thursday, Dec. 26.)

Wind in the Willows—A musical based on Kenneth Grahame's classic. The book is by Jane Iredale, the score by William Perry, and the lyrics by Roger McGough and Mr. Perry. The director is Edward Berkeley. (Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Christmas, and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3; special matinée Thursday, Dec. 26, at 2.)

Long Runs—**BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS:** A remembrance of things past, by Neil Simon. The hero is a sex-obsessed fifteen-year-old. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except New Year's Day and Monday, Jan. 2, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Special performances Friday, Dec. 27, at 3; Monday, Dec. 30, at 3 and 8; and New Year's Day at 3.) . . . **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES:** A dazzling production of a musical that has little wit and a lot of phony sentimentality about the tenderhearted family life of homosexuals. The music, by Jerry Herman, is Broadway-romantic. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 757-2626. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Christmas, and Saturdays at 2; special matinée Thursday, Dec. 26.) . . . **CATS:** Ezra Pound nicknamed T. S. Eliot "Old Possum," and under that name Eliot wrote a collection of poems about cats, and now the cats are on display on Broadway, with music by Andrew Lloyd Webber, scenery by John Napier, and direction by Trevor Nunn. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays, except Christmas, and Saturdays at 2; special matinées Friday, Dec. 27, and Sunday, Dec. 29, at 3.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays and Christmas, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2. Special performances Thursday, Dec. 26, at 3; Sunday, Dec. 29, at 3 and 7:30; and New Year's Day at 3.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 10,680 performances so far. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FOREIGNER:** A very funny play by the late Larry Shue, with good performances by every single member of the company, most notably by Kevin Geer as a lovable half-wit. Jerry Zaks was the admirable director. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. Wednesdays, except New Year's Day, through Fridays at 8; Saturdays and New Year's Eve at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3. Special performance Monday, Dec. 30, at 8.) . . . **42ND STREET:** Once upon a time there was a silly-wonderful Warner Brothers musical about a young hoofer who goes on in place of a disabled star and herself becomes a star overnight. The legitimate musical that has been fashioned from the movie musical is just as silly but by no means as wonderful. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays, except New Year's Day, at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Special performances Thursday, Dec. 26, at 3, and Monday, Dec. 30, at 3 and 8.) . . . **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS:** Based on Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Thursdays and Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 2 and 5. Special performances Thursday, Dec. 26, at 2; Monday, Dec. 30, at 8; and New Year's Eve at 6 and 9.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

Radio City Music Hall—The annual Christmas show, with, of course, the Rockettes. (Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 246-4600. Christmas at 2:30 and 7:30; Thursday through Saturday, Dec. 26-28, and Monday, Dec. 30, at 10, 1:30, 5, and 8:30; Sunday, Dec. 29, at 12:30, 4, and 7:30; and Wednesday through Saturday, Jan. 1-4, at 2:30 and 7:30. Through Thursday, Jan. 9.)

Big Apple Circus—A one-ring tent circus. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. Wednesday through Monday, Dec. 25-30, at 12:30 and 4; Tuesday, Dec. 31, at 2 and 8; Wednesday through Friday, Jan. 1-3, at 12:30 and 4; and Saturday, Jan 4, at 2 and 7:30. Through Sunday, Jan. 5. For information about tickets, call 860-7320.)

New York Gilbert and Sullivan Players—Presenting **IOLANTHE.** (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 769-1000. Fridays, Dec. 27 and Jan. 3, at 8; Saturdays, Dec. 28 and Jan. 4, at 3 and 8; Sundays, Dec. 29 and Jan. 5, and Monday, Dec. 30, at 3; and New Year's Eve and Thursday, Jan. 2, at 8.)

Forbidden Broadway 1986—A musical satire of Shubert Alley denizens. The lyrics to the song parodies are by Gerard Alessandrini. (Palsson's Upstairs, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. Tuesdays through Thursdays, except Christmas, at 8:30; Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30 and 11:30; and Sundays at 8:30. Special performance Monday, Dec. 30, at 8:30.)

DANCE

New York City Ballet—Performances of "The Nutcracker" are being presented through Sunday, Jan. 5. (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Thursdays and Monday, Dec. 30, at 6; Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 2 and 8; Sundays at 1 and 5; and New Year's Eve at 7. Through Sunday, Feb. 23.)

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre—Final performances of the engagement—Wednesday, Dec. 25, at 8: "Speeds," "The Stack-Up," and "Revelations." . . . ¶ Thursday, Dec. 26, at 8: "Blues Suite," "Love Songs," "Rainbow 'Round My Shoulder," and "Suite Otis." . . . ¶ Friday, Dec. 27, at 8: "Night Creature," "Portrait of Billie," "For Bird with Love," and "Concerto in F." . . . ¶ Saturday, Dec. 28, at 2: "Pigs & Fishes," "Fever Swamp," "Night Shade," and "How to Walk an Elephant." . . . ¶ Saturday, Dec. 28, at 8: "Memoria," "Divining," and "The Stack-Up." . . . ¶ Sunday, Dec. 29, at 3: "Isba," "Portrait of Billie," "Suite Otis," and "Revelations." . . . ¶ Sunday, Dec. 29, at 7:30: "Speeds," "Divining," and "For Bird with Love." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989.)

Annabelle Gamson/Dance Solos, Inc.—A new company of solo performers. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Wednesday through Saturday, Jan. 1-4, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 5, at 3.)

Tango Argentino—A troupe of thirty dancers, singers, and musicians. (Mark Hellinger Theatre, 237 W. 51st St. 757-7064. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Special performance Monday, Dec. 30, at 8.)

Balletfore—Performances of "The Nutcracker." (Theatre of the Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. 864-2929. Friday, Dec. 27, at 7; Saturday, Dec. 28, at 2 and 7; and Sunday, Dec. 29, at 2.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—**JULIE WILSON**, a wonderfully non-self-indulgent singer, concentrates on the music of Kurt Weill in the Oak Room Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Christmas, at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. On New Year's Eve, there will be one show at eleven-fifteen. Dining.

Angry Squire, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—Thursday, Dec. 26, Steve Berger; Friday and Saturday, Dec. 27-28, the **ANDY LAVERNE** trio; Sunday, Dec. 29, Stella Larsen; Monday, Dec. 30, the Randy Johnston trio; Tuesday and Wednesday, Dec. 31-Jan. 1, High Society; Thursday, Jan. 2, the 29th Street Sax Quartet; and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 3-4, trumpeter **BILL HARDMAN**. Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—**BLOSSOM DEARIE** is ensconced in this club, singing in her small, delicate, uncomplicated, diction-perfect voice. Early-evening concerts Wednesdays through Saturdays from six-thirty to eight-thirty. On New Year's Eve, **BLOSSOM DEARIE** can be heard from seven-thirty, and starting at ten-thirty **MARGARET WHITING** will provide vocals. Closed Christmas and New Year's Day.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A dark, large, carpeted club with deep-blue tablecloths and a curvy bar. **PHYLLIS HYMAN** sings through Monday, Dec. 30, and starting Tuesday, Dec. 31, the **FREDDIE HUBBARD** band will trade sets with singer **BETTY CARTER** and her trio. Sets begin after nine; New Year's Eve at six. Jubilant hard-bop trumpeter **TED CURSON** presides over after-hours jam sessions every night but Monday and New Year's Eve until about four in the morning. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A large-venue pop, rock, folk, and jazz club with, thank heavens, tables and chairs. Friday through Tuesday, Dec. 27-31, the Turtles, featuring Flo and Eddie; Friday and Saturday, Jan. 3-4, the Fugs. Shows Sundays through Tuesdays at eight and eleven; Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty; and New Year's Eve at nine-thirty and one-thirty. Dining. Closed Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A real New York bar; it has dark wood panelling, Type A conversationalists, and some very good piano-bass teams. **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and **RED MITCHELL** are here through Saturday, Dec. 28; Sunday, Dec. 29, **LEE ANN LEDGERWOOD** will work with **MR. MITCHELL**; and on Monday, Dec. 30, **TOMMY FLANAGAN** and **GEORGE**

MRAZ will come in. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle is a cozy, elegant room where, through New Year's Eve, you can hear **BOBBY SHORT,** always a cozy, elegant, and, above all, vivacious singer-pianist, with his trusty musical entourage, bassist **BEVERLY PEER** and drummer **ROBBIE SCOTT.** On Thursday, Jan. 2, pianist **GEORGE SHEARING** will arrive with bassist **DON THOMPSON.** Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Christmas and New Year's Day, at ten and midnight; New Year's Eve at nine. Dining. . . . ¶ Over in the Bemelmans Bar, pianist **BARBARA CARROLL** is singing and soloing Tuesdays through Saturdays, except Christmas, from ten.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Exposed rafters, weathered, splintery wood posts, decrepit neon beer signs, and a general ramshackle feel. All this and rock and roll, too. Monday is showcase night. Shows nightly from long after nine-thirty.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—A velvet-and-mirror-walled below-stairs music room. Thursdays through Sundays are currently allocated to the master, **DIZZY GILLESPIE.** On New Year's Eve, **KENNY RANKIN,** the pleasant pop-jazz folkie, will be onstage. Mondays are the property of guitarist **LES PAUL'S** trio. Sets begin Thursdays through Tuesdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight. Dining. Closed Christmas and New Year's Day.

Folk City, 130 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (254-8449)—The partial schedule: Thursday, Dec. 26, Susie Unger, Mike Barry, and Kevin Ward; Saturday, Dec. 28, Jane Brucker; and Tuesday, Dec. 31, the **PERSUASIONS.** Sundays are comedy nights, and Mondays are hootenanny nights. Shows usually begin at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty.

Freddy's, 308 E. 49th St. (888-1633)—The **RONNY WHYTE** trio goes on at nine and eleven Thursday through Saturday, Dec. 26-28; Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 30-31; and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 3-4. Additional participants on New Year's Eve include singers **BARBARA RANKIN** and **JULIUS LA ROSA.** Dining.

Gregory's, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—Wednesdays through Saturdays and New Year's Eve, Kitt Moran sings with Mike Moran and John Arbo; Sundays and Mondays **BOB DOROUGH** and **BILL TAKAS** perform piano-bass duets. Music from ten.

Hanratty's, 1754 Second Ave., at 91st St. (289-3200)—A spiffy back-room haunt for traditional-jazz pianists and their admirers. **JUDY CARMICHAEL,** who looks like a wisp of a girl but who is actually a fireball of a stride pianist, is on hand Tuesdays through Saturdays. Sundays are claimed by Keith MacDonald, and Mondays by **DICK HYMAN.** Music Sundays through Thursdays from eight-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays from nine. Dining. Closed Christmas.

Knickerbocker Saloon, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant, low-keyed bar and restaurant in the piano-bass district. **JUNIOR MANCE** and **MARTY RIVERA** continue their bluesy collaborations Tuesdays through Saturdays from nine-thirty. Dining.

Lone Star Café, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—You can tell you're in New York and not in Texas: when they serve you a hamburger, they bring a jar of Dijon mustard along with it. Wednesday and Thursday, Dec. 25-26, rockabillyist **ROBERT GORDON;** Friday and Saturday, Dec. 27-28, La Bamba & the Hubcaps and Mindy J. & the Cyclone Rangers; Sunday and Monday, Dec. 29-30, New Orleans zydeco-ist **CLIFTON CHENIER** and Geoffrey Tozer and Blue Smoke, with Nelson Rangell; Tuesday, Dec. 31, New Orleans pianist **DR. JOHN** and Mindy J. & the Cyclone Rangers; Wednesday, Jan. 1, guitarist **JORMA KAUKONEN;** and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 3-4, **BO DIDDLEY,** the rock-and-roll pathfinder who looks so good in black. Music after nine. Dining.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—**BARBARA COOK** is singing here Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine and eleven. On Monday nights from nine-thirty to midnight, Woody Allen is often found playing celebrity clarinet with a traditional-jazz combo. Dining. Closed Sundays, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—A longtime music hangout on the upper West Side. Some of the schedule: Thursday, Dec. 26, DeCocoa & Hot Chocolate; Friday and Saturday, Dec. 27-28, **CISSY HOUSTON,** soul and gospel singer (and Whitney's mom); Sunday, Dec. 29, the Bobby Thomas quintet; and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 3-4, Mirage, featuring guitarist **DOC POWELL.** Music from about ten. Dining. Closed Christmas.

Rainbow Room, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (757-9090)—**PANAMA FRANCIS & THE SAVOY SULTANS** play such uplifting, irresistible, swinging music that it's nearly impossible not to want to Lindy to it. Wednesday and Thursday from seven to one; Friday and Saturday from eight to two; and Sunday from six to midnight. Dining. Closes after New Year's Eve for renovations.

Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—The mostly rock-and-roll roster: Thursday, Dec. 26, **RICHARD LLOYD;** Friday, Dec. 27, **MARSHALL CRENSHAW** and the **DEL FUEGOS;** Saturday, Dec. 28, the Circle Jerks, DOA, Toxic Reasons, and Redd Kross; and New Year's Eve, John Cafferty & the Beaver Brown band. Shows begin after nine Mondays through Thursdays, and after eleven Fridays and Saturdays. Dancing.

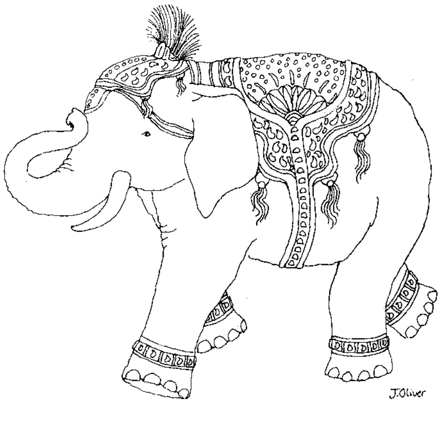
Seventh Avenue South, 21 Seventh Ave. S., at Leroy St. (242-4694)—Up-to-date jazz: Thursday, Dec. 26, guitarist **KELVYN BELL,** saxophonist **OLIVER LAKE,** and drummer **RONNIE BURRAGE;** Friday through Sunday, Dec. 27-29, guitarist **HIRAM BULLOCK** and bassist **JACO PASTORIUS;** Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 30-31, **MIKE BRECKER, HIRAM BULLOCK, JACO PASTORIUS, KENWOOD DENARD,** and **MITCH FROHMAN;** and Thursday through Sunday, Jan. 2-5, the **MIKE STERN–BOB BERG** band. Music from nine-thirty. Closed Christmas and New Year's Day.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—On its busy weekends, this club feels like the rush hour in Rio. Thursday, Dec. 26, percussionist **BABA OLATUNJI;** Saturday, Dec. 28, **MIKATA;** New Year's Eve, singer and songwriter **RUBÉN BLADES;** and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 3-4, **LOREMIL MACHADO.** Music from ten. Dining. Closed Sundays, Mondays, and Wednesdays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Wednesday and Thursday, Dec. 25-26, the **GIL EVANS** orchestra envelops the place, and starting Friday, Dec. 27, **ART BLAKEY & THE JAZZ MESSENGERS** will be the music makers. Shows from about ten. Dining.

Tramps, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—A simple basic blues and rock club. The partial schedule: Thursday, Dec. 26, the Bullies; Friday, Dec. 27, Little Buster & the Soul Brothers; Saturday, Dec. 28, **BUSTER POINDEXTER** (David Johansen in a tux) **& THE BANSHEES OF BLUE;** Sunday, Dec. 29, Lew Willie & the Snapdragons; Monday, Dec. 30, Kristi Rose & the Dying Breed; and Tuesday, Dec. 31, **BUSTER POINDEXTER & THE BANSHEES OF BLUE.** Music after nine-thirty.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the Top of the Gate on Fridays and Saturdays the **HARLEM BLUES & JAZZ BAND** participates in swing-music-and-jitterbug evenings that begin after nine. . . . ¶ Downstairs, on Thursday, Dec. 26, **ERROL PARKER'S** tentet can be found, and on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 27-28, **TITO PUENTE** and **MONGO SANTAMARIA** will share the stage. On New Year's Eve, upstairs and downstairs will be filled with music from ten to five, performed by people such as **STANLEY TURRENTINE, JIMMY SMITH, KENNY BURRELL,** and a cast of many others. . . . ¶ Out on the Terrace, **JAKI BYARD** and bassist **RALPH HAMPERIAN** play together nightly, except Mondays. Music from nine-thirty.



Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Perhaps the most famous basement in the world, now fifty years old, has been described by Max Gordon, the wise proprietor and resident father figure, as "a good joint that people like to come to—thank God." **FRANK FOSTER** and **FRANK WESS,** the absolutely wonderful saxophonists from the great Basie band of the fifties and sixties, are co-piloting a quintet through Sunday, Dec. 29. On Tuesday, Dec. 31, trombonist **AL GREY** (another ex-Basie-ite) and saxophonist **AL COHN** will bring in their quintet. Monday nights are Blast-Off Nights for the **MEL LEWIS BIG BAND.** Music from ten.

West End, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Past the steam tables of piping-hot student food, beyond the pinball machines is a room full of swing music, Latin jazz, and hard bop. Wednesday, Dec. 25, the Ronnie Cole quartet; Thursday through Tuesday, Dec. 26-31, Percy France, with **IRENE REID** contributing bluesy vocals on Friday and Saturday, Dec. 27-28, and New Year's Eve. Music from about nine.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A SoHo-sleek and spacious bar and restaurant with a musical passageway between them. Thursday through Saturday, Dec. 26-28, pianist **ROGER KELLAWAY** will work with bassist **MICHAEL MOORE;** Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 30-31, and Thursday through Saturday, Jan. 2-4, **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and **CECIL MC BEE** will provide the piano-bass music; and Sundays are allotted to guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** and bassist **GARY MAZZAROPPI.** Music weeknights from eight and Sundays from seven. Closed Christmas and New Year's Day.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

Robert Klein—With Kenny Rankin. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Wednesday through Friday, Dec. 25-27, at 8; Saturday, Dec. 28, at 7 and 10; Sunday through Tuesday, Dec. 29-31, at 8; Thursday and Friday, Jan. 2-3, at 8; and Saturday, Jan. 4, at 7 and 10.)

Kid Creole & the Coconuts—Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Thursday, Dec. 26, at 8.

Wynton Marsalis Quartet—Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Thursday, Dec. 26, at 8; Friday and Saturday, Dec. 27-28, at 8 and 11:30; Sunday and Monday, Dec. 29-30, at 8; Tuesday, Dec. 31, at 7 and 11; Thursday, Jan. 2, at 8; Friday and Saturday, Jan. 3-4, at 8 and 11:30; and Sunday, Jan. 5, at 8.

Junior Cook–Bill Hardman Quintet—With Suzanne Klewan and Timmy Shepherd. (Jazz Cultural Theatre, Eighth Ave. between 28th and 29th Sts. 502-4300. Friday and Saturday, Dec. 27-28, at 10, 11:30, and 1.)

Barry Manilow—Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 246-4600. Tuesday, Dec. 31, at 7 and 10:30.

Barry Harris Trio—With C-Sharpe and others. (Jazz Cultural Theatre. Tuesday, Dec. 31, at 9.)

Jazz on Television—A series of programs featuring jazz performers on TV during the past thirty years is being given at the Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St., through Thursday, Jan. 30. (For information about scheduling, call 752-4690.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. They will be closed Christmas and New Year's Day. Some, as indicated, will be closed on other days during the holidays, and some are likely to close early on Tuesday, Dec. 31.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Luis Benedit—Paintings and objects in which crudely executed figures are engaged in such

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

activities as knife-fighting or lovemaking. Through Tuesday, Dec. 31. (CDS Gallery, 13 E. 75th St. Open Mondays.)

Ralston Crawford (1906-78)—Prints. Through Saturday, Jan. 4. (Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. Closed Tuesday, Dec. 31. A retrospective is at the Whitney Museum.)

Stuart Davis (1892-1964)—Line drawings on canvas and paper. Through Saturday, Dec. 28. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St.)

Sonia Delaunay (1885-1979)—Watercolors and prints. Through Jan. 31. (Rolly-Michaux, 943 Madison Ave., at 75th St.)

Nancy Graves—Colorful new metal sculptures, many with movable parts. Through Jan. 8. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Oskar Kokoschka (1886-1980)—Paintings and drawings from the early part of the artist's career. Through Feb. 15. (Sabarsky, 987 Madison Ave., at 77th St. Opens at noon.)

André Masson—Eighteen drawings and a handful of paintings spanning the twenties to the fifties. Through Jan. 11. (Simon-Neuman, 42 E. 76th St.)

Bill Traylor (1854-1947)—Drawings made on cardboard scraps by an Alabama naïf. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. Through Jan. 11. Closed Tuesday, Dec. 31. . . . ¶ Ross, 162 W. 56th St. Through Jan. 18. Opens at noon on Saturdays.)

William Wilkins—Landscape, still-life, and figure paintings by a British artist. Through Jan. 18. (Mathes, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

Group Show—From Bolivia and Peru, devotional paintings of the Virgin and angels which initially coincided with the establishment of Christianity in Latin America. The works span three centuries. Through Feb. 9. (Center for Inter-American Relations, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St. Daily, except Mondays, noon to 6.)

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

Elena Borstein—Cityscapes of the Bronx, by an artist better known for her paintings of Greece. Through Saturday, Jan. 4. (Markel, 50 W. 57th St.)

Joan Brady—Watercolors of still-lifes in interiors. Through Saturday, Dec. 28. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

Gary Brotmeyer—Small collages made with old portrait photographs, which are altered with, say, a wisp of human hair or part of a doll's face. Through Jan. 18. (Laurence Miller, 38 E. 57th St.)

Douglas Cooper—Large-scale charcoal perspective drawings of imaginary interiors. Through Jan. 18. (Alex Rosenberg, 20 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Dorothy Dehner—Bronzes from the past twenty years and drawings done in the forties and fifties. Through Saturday, Dec. 28. (Dorsky, 58 W. 58th St.)

Michael Graves—A two-gallery show of works by an architect. Drawings and models. Through Saturday, Jan. 4. (Protetch, 37 W. 57th St.) . . . ¶ Drawings and models, including works made in collaboration with Raymond Kaskey and Edward Schmidt. Through Feb. 1. (Nichols, 83 Grand St. Opens at noon.)

Stanley William Hayter—A retrospective of paintings and works on paper by the founder of Atelier 17 in Paris. Through Jan. 15. (Armstrong, 50 W. 57th St. Closed Tuesday, Dec. 31.) . . . ¶ Cole, 101 W. 57th St., has a show of prints. (Through Saturday, Dec. 28.)

David Hockney / Michael Steiner—A twenty-foot painting, large-scale drawings, and prints—all recent work. / Abstract bronzes. Through Saturday, Jan. 4. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Robert M. Kulicke—Oils and monotypes, plus jewelry designed by Mr. Kulicke and Bessie Jamieson. Through Saturday, Jan. 4. (Davis & Langdale, which has moved to 231 E. 60th St. Closed Tuesday, Dec. 31.)

Allen Ruppersberg—Preparatory works, as it were, for fictitious publications, including mechanicals that consist of pictures from calendars and titles carved into wood logs. Through Saturday, Dec. 28. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St.)

George Stubbs (1724-1806)—Etchings. Through Saturday, Dec. 28. (Donson, 24 W. 57th St.)

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29	30	31	1	2	3	4

George Sugarman—Recent work, including painted cutout-aluminum sculptures. Through Saturday, Dec. 28. (Robert Miller, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Another exhibition is at the Whitney Museum.)

Donald Sultan / José María Sicilia—Small still-lifes—pears, eggs, lemons—painted with tar and acrylics on linoleum tiles. Some of the lemons are black. / Abstract paintings on panels, characterized by expanses of very strong colors, generously applied. Through Saturday, Jan. 4. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

William Zorach (1889-1966)—Oils the artist did prior to abandoning painting for sculpture, plus sculptures that include his very first piece—a wood bas-relief dated 1917. Through Saturday, Jan. 4. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

American Stone Carvers—Nineteenth- and twentieth-century pieces, the latter by Lachaise, Nadelman, Bourgeois, and others. Through Saturday, Dec. 28. (Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St.)

Group Shows—At the **herstand**, 24 W. 57th St.: Drawings and sculptures by Balthus, Klee, Noguchi, and others. Through Jan. 11. . . . **janis**, 110 W. 57th St.: Early-twentieth-century works—paintings (by Picasso, Braque, Gris, and others), sculptures (by Arp, Ernst, and others), and two Mondrian drawings. Through Jan. 25. (Open Mondays.) . . . **lamagna**, 50 W. 57th St.: Called "REM," after that stage of sleep, a show of dream-imagery works in various mediums by contemporary artists Jonathan Borofsky, Michael Lucero, and others. Through Jan. 25. (Closed Thursday, Dec. 26.) . . . **marlborough**, 40 W. 57th St.: Paintings by Altoon Sultan, sculptures by Lynn Chadwick, and photographs by Bill Brandt. Through Tuesday, Dec. 31. (Open Mondays.) . . . **midtown**, 11 E. 57th St.: Figurative paintings, drawings, and etchings by Isabel Bishop, Paul Cadmus, and Bernarda Bryson Shahn. Through Jan. 13. (Closed Thursday, Dec. 26.) . . . **pearl**, 38 E. 57th St.: "The Severe and the Romantic" is the title given to a selection of more than twenty abstract geometric paintings by American artists, including Fritz Glarner, Jeanne Miles, Max Coles, and Budd Hopkins. Through Saturday, Jan. 4.

Sculpture—Sondra Beal, Mark di Suvero, and David Weinrib are among the seven artists represented in this show of abstract works from the early sixties in steel, wood, and plastic. Through Jan. 9. (Frumkin, 50 W. 57th St.)

GALLERIES—SoHo

Donald Baechler—Studiedly crude paintings of heads, cookielike tree shapes, the planet Earth, ducks. Through Saturday, Jan. 4. (Shafrazi, 163 Mercer St.)

Jean Michel Basquiat—Paintings from 1982, some of which were executed in the basement of the Nosei gallery, the first to show the work of this art-world phenomenon. Through Jan. 8. (Nosei, 100 Prince St.)

Linda Bastian—Gardens of tropical flowers and plants, mostly, on paper, canvas, and silk. Through Jan. 11. (SoHo 20, at 469 Broome St. Opens at noon Tuesdays through Sundays.)

GALLERY
LASZLO

Justin Earl / Sylvain Delange—Portrait paintings of dogs, cows, and cats, some real and some just toys. / Figure studies carried out in swift slashes of paint. Through Thursday, Jan. 2. (Littlejohn-Smith, 133 Greene St. Open Sundays, 1 to 6; closed Thursday, Dec. 26.)

Fred Escher—Barbed-wire enclosures, military-looking tents, unattended watch fires, and abandoned weapons stretch into the far distance of these intentionally dismal landscapes. Through Saturday, Jan. 4. (Kind, 136 Greene St. Closed Tuesday, Dec. 31.)

Tom Holland / Jacques Henri Lartigue—Wall-mounted paper sculptures covered with pastel scribbles. / French women photographed in the twenties and thirties. Through Saturday, Dec. 28. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

Ann McCoy—Processions of bronze animals, supernatural figures, and boats, groupings more often seen in ancient reliefs and seals. Through Thursday, Jan. 2. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St. Closed Tuesday, Dec. 31.)

Hunt Slonem—Paintings incorporating Incan imagery. Through Saturday, Dec. 28. (Exit Art, 578 Broadway. Opens at noon.)

Anthony Zych—Landscape paintings that have components of the landscape itself—dirt, tar, pebbles—bound to the canvas with resin. Through Saturday, Jan. 4. (Viafora, 568 Broadway.)

Group Shows—At the **knowlton**, 153 Mercer St.: More or less traditional representational landscapes by thirteen painters (James Winn, Carol Anthony, Ellen Lanyon) and a group of extratraditional landscapes (many of them three-dimensional) by Howardena Pindell, Michael Lucero, and others. Through Saturday, Dec. 28. . . . **phoenix**, 568 Broadway: Black-and-white works on paper by James Bohary, Jan Henle, Aharon Gluska, Robert Motherwell, and Antoni Tàpies. Through Jan. 14. (Open Sundays.)

OTHER GALLERIES

Julie Wachtel—Oil paintings of characters who belong in a comic book and studies of Incan and Easter Island figures. The primitives come off best. Through Sunday, Dec. 29. (Nature Morte, 204 E. 10th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays. Closed Thursday, Dec. 26.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Mario Algaze—Photographs of Rufino Tamayo, Gato Barbieri, Mario Vargas Llosa, and others. Through Jan. 21. (Intar Latin American Gallery, 420 W. 42nd St. Open Mondays through Fridays, except Tuesday, Dec. 31.)

Richard Avedon—A two-gallery exhibit of photographs from his portrait series of common laborers, which is entitled "In the American West, 1979-1984." Through Jan. 11. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St. . . . ¶ Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.)

Evelyn Hofer—Dye transfers of European gardens and villas. Through Jan. 25. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway. Opens at noon. Closed Tuesday, Dec. 31.)

André Kertész (1894-1985)—Approximately a hundred and sixty prints of Paris and New York are on view at the Metropolitan Museum. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

Hiroji Kubota—Prints of China (a few enlarged to mural size) by a Japanese photojournalist. Through Jan. 5. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Richard Prince and David Robbins—Photographs. Through Saturday, Jan. 4. (303 Gallery, 303 Park Ave. S., at 23rd St. Opens at 1. Closed Tuesday, Dec. 31.)

Group Shows—At the **hoffeld**, 1020 Madison Ave., at 79th St.: Large-scale contemporary portraits by Marina Abramović, Ulay, Robert Mapplethorpe, and others. Through Jan. 18. (Closed Tuesday, Dec. 31.) . . . **museum of modern art**, 11 W. 53rd St.: An exhibit of black-and-white prints, called

"Variants," brings together works that, to simplify, demonstrate the choices a photographer makes either behind the camera or in the darkroom. For instance, a farmer cropped from Dorothea Lange's 1937 "Five Tenant Farmers Without Farms" was restored by her in a print made in the sixties. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"Costumes of Royal India," an extravaganza evoking palaces of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when the garments on view were worn by rajas, maharajas, ranis, maharanis, nizams, and nawabs. Also, accessories, furnishings, and portraits. . . . ¶ A seventeenth-century imperial Mughal tent is the centerpiece of a wide-ranging exhibition of Indian art, numbering more than three hundred objects of religious and secular derivation. Through Jan. 5. . . . ¶ A gilded French rococo carriage, decorated with paintings from the studio of Boucher, and Rubens' monumental painting "The Assumption of the Virgin" set the tone of an elaborate show of art works acquired or commissioned by the Princes of Liechtenstein between the sixteenth century and the nineteenth. Ornate firearms in the collection occupy one gallery. . . . **PHOTOGRAPHY:** Prints by André Kertész. Through Feb. 23. (Open daily except Mondays, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—An exhibit of lithographs and posters, mainly, by Toulouse-Lautrec, all from his last ten years. Through Jan. 26. . . . ¶ The Riklis collection of geometric abstract paintings, drawings, and sculptures has come the museum's way, and selections from it are the nucleus of an exhibit that follows this aspect of abstraction from European Cubism and Constructivism right up to American Minimalism. Through Jan. 7. . . . **PHOTOGRAPHY:** A selection of prints by Americans and Europeans. Through March 11. (Open daily, except Wednesdays and Tuesday, Dec. 31, from 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9; Tuesday, Dec. 31, from 11 to 5.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A show of about a hundred and twenty sculptures representing the different styles used by American and European artists since the forties, and singling out the contributions of Giacometti, David Smith, and Cornell. Through Feb. 16. (Open daily except Mondays and Christmas. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—An exhibit that examines American decorative and industrial design in this century, with examples extending from a Frank Lloyd Wright dining set to an Apple IIc personal computer. Through Feb. 16. . . . ¶ A Ralston Crawford (1906-78) retrospective of paintings, drawings, photographs, and lithographs. Through Feb. 2. A complementary show is at Hirschl & Adler Galleries, 21 E. 70th St. . . . ¶ Twelve abstract painted-wood sculptures by George Sugarman, completed between 1961 and 1966. Through Feb. 9. A show (ending Saturday, Dec. 28) of current work is at the Robert Miller Gallery, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (The museum is open daily except Mondays, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Hours: Tuesday, Dec. 31, from 1 to 5; Wednesdays, except Christmas and New Year's Day, through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—A retrospective of Jennifer Bartlett's work includes large-scale paintings, sculptures of objects seen in the paintings, and drawings. Through Jan. 6. . . . ¶ Sixty sculptures by ten artists who have their studios in Brooklyn, among them Judy Pfaff and Ray Rapp. Through Jan. 6. (Open daily except Tuesdays, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, except Christmas and New Year's Day, through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Seventy-six paintings by American artists who have recorded the American West, to document either its history or its natural beauty. George Catlin, Charles Russell, Georgia O'Keeffe, Chuck Forsman, and others. Through Feb. 16. (Open daily except Christmas. Hours: Mon-

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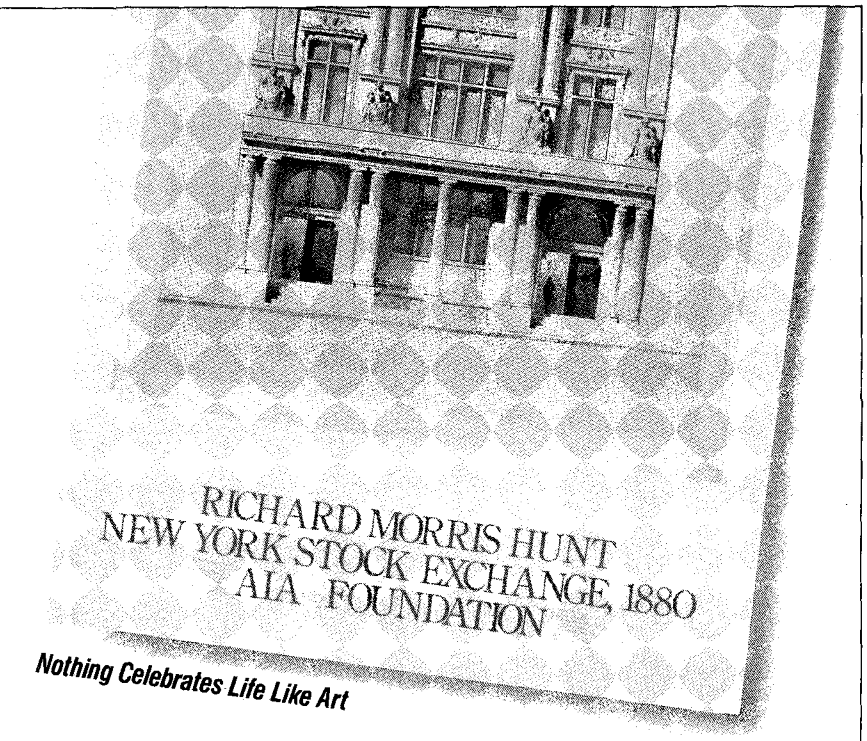
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days, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, except Christmas, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St.—Paintings, illustrated manuscripts, carpets, and other works from a productive period in Indian art masterminded by the sixteenth-century Mughal emperor Akbar. Through Jan. 5. (Open daily except Mondays, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—The Festival of India has transformed the museum into a bazaarlike exhibition space filled with goods made by Indian artisans to the specifications of American and European designers—Mario Bellini's marble base for upholstery and Mary McFadden's adaptations of traditional costumes and jewelry are two. Through Feb. 23. (Open daily except Mondays, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays, except Christmas and New Year's Day, through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—A show concerning the Ingres portrait of Comtesse d'Haussonville painted between 1842 and 1845. With the work as its focal point, the exhibit examines and documents everything from the porcelains seen in the portrait to memorabilia of the Comtesse to the artist's preparatory studies. Through Feb. 16. (Open daily except Mondays, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—An exhibit of paintings, drawings, and sculptures by the community of immigrant Jewish artists who moved to the Montparnasse section of Paris in the first half of this century. Chagall, Modigliani, Zadkine, and Sonia Delaunay are among them. Through Feb. 2. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"The Golden Age of British Photography, 1839-1900," an exhibit of more than two hundred photographs from the Victoria & Albert Museum. Through Feb. 2. (Open daily except Mondays, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Hours: Tuesdays, except Dec. 31, through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5; Tuesday, Dec. 31, from 10:30 to 1.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—Frederic Remington's impressions (paintings and sketches) of northern New York State, where he was born, done at the same time as the Western illustrations that earned him his reputation. Through Jan. 11. (Open daily except Mondays, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Hours: Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 5; Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Ten Centuries of Spanish Books," an exhibition of illuminated manuscripts, first editions and manuscripts, maps, and prints, including an eleventh-century Book of Hours belonging to King Ferdinand I, a first edition of "Don Quixote," and poems in the hand of García Lorca. On loan from Spanish libraries. Through Monday, Dec. 30. (Open daily, except Sundays and Christmas, 10 to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—Black American folk art as well as art and artifacts from Africa and the Caribbean. All the works—more than forty paintings and sculptures and nearly two hundred gold weights—are on loan from private collectors. . . . ¶ Paintings by Candida Alvarez and Charles Burwell and a sculptural installation by Maren Hassinger. Both shows through Jan. 19. (Open Thursdays and Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; and for Carnegie Hall 247-7800. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Thursday, Dec. 26, at 8: The Erik Satie ballet "Parade," with Gary Chryst and the Metropolitan Opera Ballet; Poulenc's opera "Les Mamelles de Tirésias," with Peggy Bouveret, Allan Glassman, and Allan Monk; and Ravel's opera "L'Enfant et les Sortilèges," with Roberta Peters, Gwendolyn Bradley, and Hilda Harris. Manuel Rosenthal will be the conductor for all three works. . . . ¶ Friday, Dec. 27, at 8: "Le Nozze di Figaro," with Carol Vaness, Kaaren Erickson, Diane Kesling, Thomas Allen, and Ruggero Raimondi; conducted by James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, Dec. 28, at 1: "Lohengrin," with Eva Marton, Leonie Rysanek, Peter Hofmann, and Leif Roar; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, Dec. 28, at 8: The Erik Satie ballet "Parade," with Gary Chryst and the Metropolitan Opera Ballet; Poulenc's opera "Les Mamelles de Tirésias," with Barbara Daniels, David Holloway, and Allan Monk; and Ravel's opera "L'Enfant et les Sortilèges," with Roberta Peters, Gwendolyn Bradley, and Hilda Harris. Manuel Rosenthal will be the conductor for all three works. . . . ¶ Monday, Dec. 30, at 8: "Le Nozze di Figaro," with Kathleen Battle, Frederica von Stade, Thomas Allen, and Ruggero Raimondi; James Levine. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Dec. 31, at 8: "L'Italiana in Algeri," with Myra Merritt, Marilyn Horne, Douglas Ahlstedt, and Paolo Montarsolo; James Levine. (A non-subscription performance.) . . . ¶ Wednesday, Jan. 1, at 7: "Lohengrin," with Eva Marton, Leonie Rysanek, Edward Sooter, and Leif Roar; James Levine. . . . ¶ Thursday, Jan. 2, at 8: "Le Nozze di Figaro," with Kay Griffel, Kathleen Battle, Frederica von Stade, Thomas Allen, and Ruggero Raimondi; Max Epstein. . . . ¶ Friday, Jan. 3, at 8: The Erik Satie ballet "Parade," with Gary Chryst and the Metropolitan Opera Ballet; Poulenc's opera "Les Mamelles de Tirésias," with Barbara Daniels, Allan Glassman, and Brian Schexnayder; and Ravel's opera "L'Enfant et les Sortilèges," with Evelyn Petros, Marvis Martin, and Gwendolyn Bradley. Manuel Rosenthal will be the conductor for all three works. . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 4, at 1: "L'Italiana in Algeri," with Myra Merritt, Marilyn Horne, Douglas Ahlstedt, and Paolo Montarsolo; James Levine. . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 4, at 7: "Lohengrin," with Sabine Hass, Leonie Rysanek, Peter Hofmann, and Leif Roar; James Levine.

Amato Opera Company—Puccini's "La Bohème." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Saturdays and Tuesday, Dec. 31, at 7:30, and Sundays at 2:30.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Following a brief vacation, the orchestra will resume performances next week, with Klaus Tennstedt conducting an all-Wagner program, with Ute Vinzing, soprano. (Avery Fisher Hall. Tuesday, Dec. 31, and Thursday through Saturday, Jan. 2-4, at 8, and Tuesday, Jan 7, at 7:30.)

Y Chamber Symphony—Gerard Schwarz conducting performances of the complete Bach Brandenburg Concertos. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Thursday, Dec. 26, and Saturday, Dec. 28, at 8; Sunday, Dec. 29, at 3; and Tuesday, Dec. 31, at 8.)

New York String Orchestra—Alexander Schneider conducting a Haydn-Mozart-Strauss program, with Peter Wiley, cello. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, Dec. 29, at 8.)

Handel's "Messiah"—David Randolph directing the Masterwork Chorus and Orchestra, with Judith Nicosia, soprano; Michael May, harpsichord continuo; and others. (Avery Fisher Hall. Friday, Dec. 27, at 8, and Saturday, Dec. 28, at 2:30 and 8.) . . . ¶ Johannes Somary directing the Amor Artis Chamber Choir, with Julianne Baird, soprano; Jeffrey Dooley, countertenor; Grayson Hirst, tenor; and Peter Stewart, baritone. (St. Ignatius Episcopal Church, West End Ave. and 87th St. Sunday, Dec. 29, at 4. Admission by contribution.)

Amor Artis Choir and Orchestra—Johannes Somary directing, with Yuval Waldman, violin. (Church of the Ascension, Fifth Ave. at 10th St. Tuesday, Dec. 31, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.

RECITALS

New York Cornet and Sacbut Ensemble—With the Boston Shawm and Sackbut Ensemble, and Benjamin Harms, percussion. (Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Sunday, Dec. 29, at 8.)

Guarneri Quartet—The third in a series of six concerts presenting the Beethoven cycle. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Saturday, Jan. 4, at 8.)

Note—Arkady Aronov, piano, will give a recital at the Frick Collection (1 E. 70th St.) on Sunday, Jan. 12, at 5. Free tickets, limited to two per applicant, will be issued starting Monday, Dec. 30, in the order that written applications are received on that day (not before). A self-addressed envelope should be enclosed.

MISCELLANY

"Luisa Fernanda"—A Spanish zarzuela, composed by Federico Moreno Torroba. (Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850. Saturday, Dec. 28, at 8, and Tuesday, Dec. 31, at 9.)

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden is 564-4400.)

Professional Basketball—At **MADISON SQUARE GARDEN:** Knicks vs. Boston, Wednesday, Dec. 25, at 3:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Atlanta, Saturday, Dec. 28, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Washington, Thursday, Jan. 2, at 7:30. . . . **BYRNE MEADOWLANDS ARENA** (1-201 935-8888): Nets vs. Detroit, Thursday, Dec. 26. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Washington, Saturday, Dec. 28. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Knicks, Monday, Dec. 30. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Cleveland, Saturday, Jan. 4. (Games begin at 7:30.)

Hockey—At **MADISON SQUARE GARDEN:** Rangers vs. Washington Capitals, Sunday, Dec. 29, at 7:35. . . . **NASSAU COLISEUM:** Islanders vs. Hartford Whalers, Thursday, Dec. 26, at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Boston Bruins, Thursday, Jan. 2, at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Chicago Black Hawks, Saturday, Jan. 4, at 7:05. (Hempstead Turnpike, Uniondale, L.I. 1-516 794-9100.) . . . **BYRNE MEADOWLANDS ARENA** (1-201 935-3900): Devils vs. Montreal Canadiens, Friday, Dec. 27, at 7:35. . . . ¶ Devils vs. Washington Capitals, Friday, Jan. 3, at 7:35.

Racing—At **AQUEDUCT:** Daily, except Christmas, at 12:30. The Firenze Handicap, Saturday, Dec. 28; the Display Handicap, Tuesday, Dec. 31; and the Aqueduct Handicap, Saturday, Jan. 4. . . . **MEADOWLANDS:** Thursday through Saturday, Dec. 26-28, and Monday, Dec. 30, at 8, and final day Tuesday, Dec. 31, at 1:30.

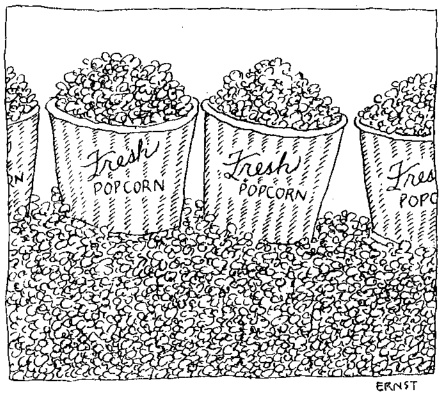
Trotting—At Roosevelt Raceway, Westbury: Nightly, except Christmas, at 8; through Monday, Jan. 6.

ET ALIA

Poetry and Prose Readings—The twelfth annual non-stop reading of Gertrude Stein's "The Making of Americans," by nearly a hundred tireless readers. (Paula Cooper Gallery, 155 Wooster St. Tuesday, Dec. 31, at 8 P.M., through the evening of Thursday, Jan. 2. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ A benefit marathon poetry reading by more than eighty poets, plus dancers, musicians, and other performers. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. Wednesday, Jan. 1, starting at 7. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.)

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 11.

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through Dec. 26: “Only Emptiness Remains” (1984; directed by Rodolfo Kuhn), a documentary.
From Dec. 27: Je Tu Il Elle” (1974; Chantal Akerman; in French).

New Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
“The Jewel of the Nile” (Lewis Teague), with Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and Danny DeVito.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
“Santa Claus: The Movie” (Jeannot Szwarc), with Dudley Moore and John Lithgow.

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
“Spies Like Us” (John Landis), with Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: “Rocky IV” (Sylvester Stallone), with Stallone, Talia Shire, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers.
Theatre 2: “A Chorus Line” (Richard Attenborough).
Theatre 3: “Young Sherlock Holmes” (Barry Levinson), with Nicholas Rowe and Alan Cox.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
“Enemy Mine” (Wolfgang Petersen), with Dennis Quaid and Louis Gossett, Jr.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
“101 Dalmatians” (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
“The Jewel of the Nile” (Lewis Teague), with Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and Danny DeVito.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
“Enemy Mine” (Wolfgang Petersen), with Dennis Quaid and Louis Gossett, Jr.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
“Fool for Love” (Robert Altman), with Sam Shepard, Kim Basinger, Randy Quaid, and Harry Dean Stanton.

Manhattan 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: “Spies Like Us” (John Landis), with Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd.
Theatre 2: “Spies Like Us.”

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: “White Nights” (†).
Theatre 2: “Clue” (Jonathan Lynn; ending A).

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
“Kiss of the Spider Woman” (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: “Ran” (Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese).
Theatre 2: “The Trip to Bountiful” (Peter Masterson), with Geraldine Page and John Heard.

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: “Twice in a Lifetime” (†).
Theatre 2: “Santa Claus: The Movie” (Jeannot Szwarc), with Dudley Moore and John Lithgow.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
“The Color Purple” (†).

Loews New York Twin 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: “Revolution” (Hugh Hudson), with Al Pacino, Donald Sutherland, and Nastassja Kinski.
Theatre 2: “A Chorus Line” (Richard Attenborough).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
“The Gods Must Be Crazy” (1979; Jamie Uys).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
“Out of Africa” (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
“Enemy Mine” (Wolfgang Petersen), with Dennis Quaid and Louis Gossett, Jr.

Loews Orpheum 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: “Rocky IV” (Sylvester Stallone), with Stallone, Talia Shire, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers.
Theatre 2: “Young Sherlock Holmes” (Barry Levinson), with Nicholas Rowe and Alan Cox.

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
“The Jewel of the Nile” (Lewis Teague), with Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and Danny DeVito.

R.K.O. Century 86th St. Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 2: “Santa Claus: The Movie” (Jeannot Szwarc), with Dudley Moore and John Lithgow. From Jan. 3: “Head Office” (Ken Finkleman), with Judge Reinhold.
Theatre 2: “Spies Like Us” (John Landis), with Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum 1 and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 31: “The Horse of Pride” (1980; directed by Claude Chabrol; in French). From Jan. 1: “Raoni” (1979; Jean-Pierre Dutilleux; in Portuguese, Kayapo, and English), a documentary.
Theatre 2: “Prizzi's Honor” (†).

Bleecker St. Cinema 1 and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: Through Dec. 26: “Back to the Future” (†). Dec. 27-Jan. 2: To be announced. From Jan. 3: “Uforia” (1980; John Binder), with Cindy Williams, Harry Dean Stanton, and Fred Ward.
Theatre 2: “28 Up” (1984; Michael Apted), a documentary.

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: “Enemy Mine” (Wolfgang Petersen), with Dennis Quaid and Louis Gossett, Jr.
Theatre 2: “Runaway Train” (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, and Rebecca DeMornay.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
“Subway” (Luc Besson; in French), with Christopher Lambert and Isabelle Adjani.

R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: “Out of Africa” (†).
Theatre 2: “The Color Purple” (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: “When Father Was A [illegible] Business” (Emir Kusturica; in Yugoslav).
Theatre 2: “Kiss of the Spider Woman” (†).
Theatre 3: “Agnes of God” (Norman Jewison), with Jane Fonda, Anne Bancroft, and Meg Tilly.
Theatre 4: “Sotto, Sotto” (Lina Wertmüller; in Italian).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: “101 Dalmatians” (†).
Theatre 2: “Santa Claus: The Movie” (Jeannot Szwarc), with Dudley Moore and John Lithgow.
Theatre 3: “Clue” (Jonathan Lynn; ending B).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
“101 Dalmatians” (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
“White Nights” (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)
“Jagged Edge” (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
“The Gig” (Frank Gilroy), with Wayne Rogers and Cleavon Little.

New Carnegie, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
“Runaway Train” (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, and Rebecca DeMornay.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
“The Official Story” (Luis Puenzo; in Spanish), with Norma Aleandro.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
“Prizzi's Honor” (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
“A Chorus Line” (Richard Attenborough).

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: “Sugarbaby” (Percy Adlon; in German).
Theatre 2: “Kiss of the Spider Woman” (†).
Theatre 3: “Twice in a Lifetime” (†).

Cinema Studio 1 and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: “Shoah” (†). Part One will be shown daily.
Theatre 2: “Shoah” (†). Part Two will be shown daily.

Embassy 72nd St. 1 and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: “Jagged Edge” (†).
Theatre 2: “101 Dalmatians” (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: “Rocky IV” (Sylvester Stallone), with Stallone, Talia Shire, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers.
Theatre 2: “Young Sherlock Holmes” (Barry Levinson), with Nicholas Rowe and Alan Cox.
Theatre 3: “Out of Africa” (†).
Theatre 4: “Spies Like Us” (John Landis), with Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd.
Theatre 5: “The Color Purple” (†).
Theatre 6: “The Jewel of the Nile” (Lewis Teague), with Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and Danny DeVito.

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: “101 Dalmatians” (†).
Theatre 2: “Jagged Edge” (†).
Theatre 3: “Santa Claus: The Movie” (Jeannot Szwarc), with Dudley Moore and John Lithgow.
Theatre 4: Through Jan. 2: “Back to the Future” (†). From Jan. 3: “Head Office” (Ken Finkleman), with Judge Reinhold.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Theatres, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: “The Color Purple” (†).
Theatre 2: “Enemy Mine” (directed by Wolfgang Petersen), with Dennis Quaid and Louis Gossett, Jr.
Theatre 3: “Rambo: First Blood Part II” (†).
Theatre 4: “A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge” (Jack Sholder).
Theatre 5: “Krush Groove” (Michael Schultz).
Theatre 6: “Back to the Future” (†).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)
“101 Dalmatians” (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, B'way at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: “Clue” (Jonathan Lynn; ending A).
Theatre 3: “Clue” (ending B).
Theatre 4: “Clue” (ending C).

Loews Astor Plaza, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)
“Young Sherlock Holmes” (Barry Levinson), with Nicholas Rowe and Alan Cox.

Loews State 1 and 2, B'way at 45th. (575-5060)

Theatre 1: "Rocky IV" (Sylvester Stallone), with Stallone, Talia Shire, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers.

Theatre 2: "Out of Africa" (†).

MOVIELAND, B'way at 47th. (757-8320) "Commando" (Mark Lester), with Arnold Schwarzenegger.

NEW EMBASSY 49TH STREET, Seventh Ave. at 49th. (757-7003) (Matinées only) "One Magic Christmas" (Phillip Borsos), with Mary Steenburgen and Harry Dean Stanton; and (evenings only) "Jagged Edge" (†).

R.K.O. CENTURY NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: "Spies Like Us" (John Landis), with Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd.

Theatre 2: "Revolution" (Hugh Hudson), with Al Pacino, Donald Sutherland, and Nastassja Kinski.

R.K.O. CENTURY WARNER TWIN, B'way at 47th. (975-8369)

Theatre 1: "The Jewel of the Nile" (Lewis Teague), with Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and Danny DeVito.

Theatre 2: Through Jan. 2: "The Jewel of the Nile." From Jan. 3: "The Annihilators."

U. A. TWIN 1 AND 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1635)

Theatre 1: "Santa Claus: The Movie" (Jeannot Szwarc), with Dudley Moore and John Lithgow.

Theatre 2: To be announced.

REVIVAL HOUSES

CARNEGIE HALL CINEMA, 7th Ave. at 57th. (757-2131)

Through Dec. 26: "Rasputin" (1985; directed by Elem Klimov; in Russian).

From Dec. 27: Theatre temporarily closed.

CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through Dec. 26: "Planet of the Apes" (1968; Franklin Schaffner), with Charlton Heston, Kim Hunter, and Roddy McDowall; and "2001: A Space Odyssey" (1968; Stanley Kubrick), with Keir Dullea and Gary Lockwood.

Dec. 27-28: A program of Looney Tunes cartoons.

Dec. 29: "Henry V" (†) and "Hamlet" (1948 †).

Dec. 30-31: "Touch of Evil" (†); and "The Lady from Shanghai" (1948; Orson Welles), with Rita Hayworth, Everett Sloane, and Welles.

Jan. 1-2: "Amadeus" (1984; Miloš Forman), with F. Murray Abraham and Tom Hulce.

Jan. 3-4: "Days of Heaven" (†) and "Badlands" (†).

METRO CINEMA, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Through Dec. 31: "The Seven Samurai" (1954; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune.

Jan. 1-4: "The Hidden Fortress" (†); and "Sanjuro" (1963; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune.

REGENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Dec. 25: "It's a Wonderful Life" (1946; Frank Capra), with James Stewart, Donna Reed, Lionel Barrymore, Gloria Grahame, and Thomas Mitchell; and "The Bishop's Wife" (1947; Henry Koster), with Loretta Young, Cary Grant, and David Niven.

Dec. 26-28: "North by Northwest" (1959; Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Eva Marie Saint, James Mason, Leo G. Carroll, and Martin Landau; and "To Catch a Thief" (1955; Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Grace Kelly, Jessie Royce Landis, Charles Vanel, and Brigitte Auber.

Dec. 29-31: "You Were Never Lovelier" (†) and "Show Boat" (1951 †).

Jan. 1-4: "Rear Window" (1954; Alfred Hitchcock), with James Stewart, Grace Kelly, and Wendell Corey; and "Vertigo" (1958; Alfred Hitchcock), with James Stewart, Kim Novak, and Barbara Bel Geddes.

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THALIA, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

Dec. 25: "Romeo and Juliet" (1968; Franco Zeffirelli), with Leonard Whiting, Olivia Hussey, John McEnery, Michael York, Pat Heywood, and Milo O'Shea; and "The Taming of the Shrew" (1967; Franco Zeffirelli), with Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton.

Dec. 26: "Broadway Melody of 1940" (1940; Norman Taurog), with Fred Astaire, Eleanor Powell, and George Murphy; and "The Band Wagon" (1953; Vincente Minnelli), with Fred Astaire, Cyd Charisse, Nanette Fabray, and Oscar Levant.

Dec. 27: "Some Like It Hot" (1959; Billy Wilder), with Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis, and Jack Lemmon; and "The Apartment" (1960; Billy Wilder), with Jack Lemmon, Shirley MacLaine, and Fred MacMurray.

Dec. 28: "Entre Nous" (1984; Diane Kurys; in French), with Isabelle Huppert and Miou-Miou; and "Le Beau Mariage" (1982; Eric Rohmer; in French), with Béatrice Romand, Arielle Dombasle, and André Dussollier.

Dec. 29-31: A program of surrealist films.

Jan. 1: "Hamlet" (1969 †); and "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (1935; Max Reinhardt and William Dieterle), with James Cagney and Mickey Rooney.

Jan. 2: "Freaks" (†) and "The Mystery of the Wax Museum" (†).

Jan. 3-4: "The Man Who Envied Women" (1985; Yvonne Rainer).

THALIA SOHO, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

Dec. 25: "Santa Claus Conquers the Martians" (1964), with John Call; and "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" (1971; Mel Stuart), with Gene Wilder and Jack Albertson.

Dec. 26: "A Letter to Three Wives" (1949; Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Linda Darnell, Jeanne Crain, Celeste Holm, Ann Sothern, Kirk Douglas, and Paul Douglas; and "Dragonwyck" (1946; Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Gene Tierney, Vincent Price, Walter Huston, and Glenn Langan.

Dec. 27: "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" (1953; Howard Hawks), with Jane Russell and Marilyn Monroe; and "Niagara" (1953; Henry Hathaway), with Marilyn Monroe, Joseph Cotten, Jean Peters, and Richard Allan.

Dec. 28: "Breakfast at Tiffany's" (1961; Blake Edwards), with Audrey Hepburn, George Peppard, Patricia Neal, Martin Balsam, and Mickey Rooney; and "Sabrina" (1954; Billy Wilder), with Humphrey Bogart, Audrey Hepburn, and William Holden.

Dec. 29: "The Bicycle Thief" (†) and "Miracle in Milan" (†).

Dec. 30: "The Beautiful Blonde from Bashful Bend" (†) and "Unfaithfully Yours" (1948 †).

Dec 31: "Allegro Non Troppo" (1977; Bruno Bozzetto; in Italian), a six-episode animated and live-action film; and "Fantastic Planet" (1973; René Laloux; in French), an animated science-fiction film.

Jan. 1: "Jane Eyre" (1944; Robert Stevenson), with Joan Fontaine and Orson Welles; and "Wuthering Heights" (1939; William Wyler), with Merle Oberon, Laurence Olivier, Flora Robson, and David Niven.

Jan. 2: "I Was a Teenage Werewolf" (1957; Gene Fowler), with Michael Landon; and "I Was a Teenage Frankenstein" (1958; Herbert J. Strock), with Whit Bissell.

Jan. 3-4: "The Stunt Man" (†) and "Targets" (†).

THEATRE 80 ST. MARKS, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Dec. 25: "It Happened One Night" (1934; Frank Capra), with Claudette Colbert, Clark Gable, Walter Connolly, Roscoe Karns, and Alan Hale; and "Twentieth Century" (1934; Howard Hawks), with John Barrymore, Carole Lombard, and Ralph Forbes.

Dec. 26: "The Barretts of Wimpole Street" (1934; Sidney Franklin), with Norma Shearer and Fredric March; and "Romeo and Juliet" (1936; George Cukor), with Norma Shearer, Leslie Howard, and John Barrymore.

Dec. 27-28: "Wuthering Heights" (1939; William Wyler), with Merle Oberon, Laurence Olivier, Flora Robson, and David Niven; and "Jane Eyre" (1944; Robert Stevenson), with Joan Fontaine and Orson Welles.

Dec. 29: "La Dolce Vita" (†).

Dec. 30: "Two Women" (1961; Vittorio De Sica; in Italian), with Sophia Loren, Eleanora Brown, and Jean-Paul Belmondo; and "The Bicycle Thief" (†).

Dec. 31: "Private Lives" (†); and "Blithe Spirit" (1945; David Lean), with Constance Cummings, Rex Harrison, Kay Hammond, and Margaret Rutherford.

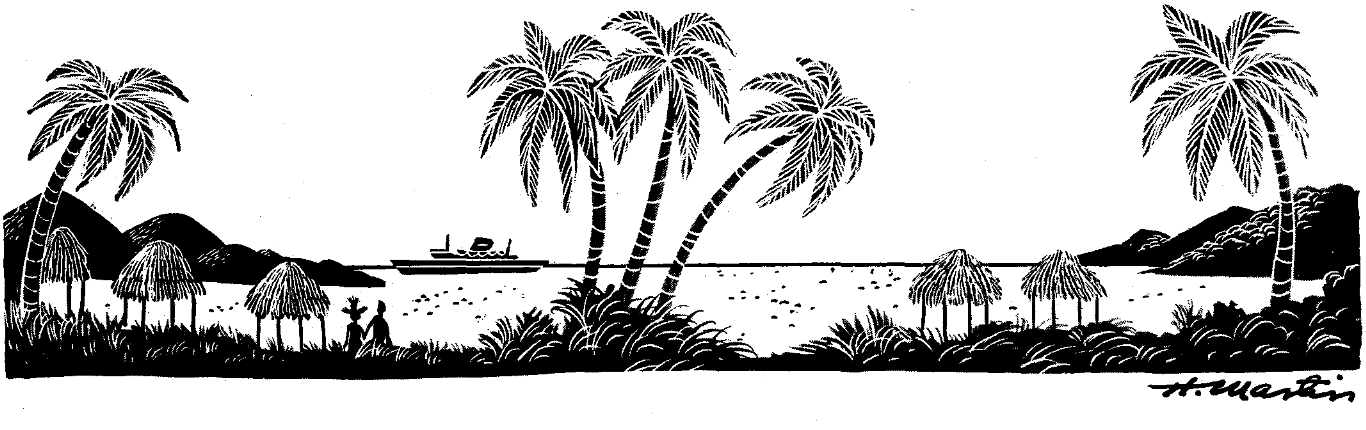
Jan. 1: "You Can't Take It with You" (†) and "The Awful Truth" (†).

Jan. 2: "The Lady from Shanghai" (1948; Orson Welles), with Rita Hayworth, Everett Sloane, and Welles; and "Gilda" (1946; Charles Vidor), with Rita Hayworth, Glenn Ford, and George Macready.

Jan. 3-4: "Sunset Boulevard" (†); and "All About Eve" (1950; Joseph L. Mankiewicz), with Bette Davis, Anne Baxter, Hugh Marlowe, Celeste Holm, and Thelma Ritter.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limit-



ed number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

THEATRE 1: Dec. 26 at 2:30 and 6: "Applause" (1929; directed by Rouben Mamoulian). . . . ¶ Dec. 27 at 2:30: "Harmony Heaven" (1930; Thomas Bentley); and "Raise the Roof" (1930; Walter Summers), with Betty Balfour and Maurice Evans. . . . ¶ Dec. 27 at 6: "Chu-Chin-Chow" (1934; Walter Forde), with Anna May Wong and Fritz Kortner. . . . ¶ Dec. 28 at 12:30: A program of Warner Brothers cartoons. . . . ¶ Dec. 28 at 2: "The Only Girl" (1933; Friedrich Hollander), with Lilian Harvey, Charles Boyer, Mady Christians, Ernest Thesiger, and Maurice Evans. . . . ¶ Dec. 28 at 5: "Elstree Calling" (1930; Adrian Brunel, Alfred Hitchcock, Andre Charlot, Jack Hulbert, and Paul Murray). . . . ¶ Dec. 29 at 12:30: A program of Warner Brothers cartoons. . . . ¶ Dec. 29 at 2: "Mister Cinders" (1934; Fred Zelnick), with Clifford Lollison and Zelma O'Neal. . . . ¶ Dec. 29 at 5: "A Cuckoo in the Nest" (1933; Tom Walls). . . . ¶ Dec. 30 at 3: "Squibs Wins the Calcutta Sweep" (1922; George Pearson; a silent film), with Betty Balfour. . . . ¶ Dec. 30 at 6 and Jan. 2 at 2:30: "Would You Believe It?" (1929; Walter Forde; a silent film). . . . ¶ Jan. 2 at 6: "Squibs Wins the Calcutta Sweep." . . . ¶ Jan. 3 at 2:30: "Elstree Calling." . . . ¶ Jan. 3 at 6: "The Only Girl." . . . ¶ Jan. 4 at 12:30: A program of Bugs Bunny cartoons. . . . ¶ Jan. 4 at 2: "Radio Parade of 1935" (1935; Arthur Woods), with Will Hay. . . . ¶ Jan. 4 at 5: "Evergreen" (1934; Victor Saville), with Jessie Matthews and Betty Balfour.

THEATRE 2: Dec. 26 at 3 and 6:30: "The Good Fight: The Abraham Lincoln Brigade in the Spanish Civil War" (1984; Noel Buckner, Mary Dore, and Sam Sills), a documentary. . . . ¶ Dec. 27 at 2:30: "Danger Ahead" (1984; Dominik Graf; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Dec. 27 at 5:30: "Drama in Blonde" (1984; Lothar Lambert; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Dec. 28 at 2:30: "China—The Arts, the Everyday" (1985; Ulrike Ottinger), a four-and-a-half-hour documentary. . . . ¶ Dec. 29 at 2:30: "Images of Germany" (1984; Helmut Bitomsky), a documentary. . . . ¶ Dec. 29 at 5:30 and Dec. 30 at 3: "King Kong's Fist" (1984; Heiner Stadler; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Dec. 30 at 6:30: "Images of Germany." . . . ¶ Dec. 31 at 3: "The Battle for the Marianas" (1944; Gordon Hollingshead); and "The Battle of China" (1944; Frank Capra and Anatole Litvak). . . . ¶ Jan. 2 at 3 and 6:30: "Nicaragua: No Pasaran" (1984; David Bradbury), a documentary. . . . ¶ Jan. 3 at 3: "Chekhov in My Life" (1984; Vadim Glowna), a documentary. . . . ¶ Jan. 3 at 6:30 and Jan. 4 at 2:30: "Death of the White Steed" (1985; Christian Ziewer; in German, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Jan. 4 at 5:30: "Chekhov in My Life."

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

The Awful Truth (1937)—A classic comedy about one of old Hollywood's favorite subjects: the divorced couple who almost bed down with new mates but get back together. Irene Dunne and Cary Grant are the sparring partners, and Ralph Bellamy plays just about the same role he later played in "His Girl Friday." Irene Dunne's way with a quip is to smile brightly and wring it dry, but she's in top form here. The cast includes Joyce Compton, Esther Dale, Cecil Cunningham, and Alex D'Arcy. Leo McCarey's direction is first-rate. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 1.)

Back to the Future—Directed by Robert Zemeckis, this piece of Pop Art Americana is a clever, generally engaging screwball comedy. Christopher Lloyd is the small-town crackpot inventor who builds a time machine, and Michael J. Fox is Marty, the seventeen-year-old high-school boy who is hurtled back thirty years to 1955, where his parents are seventeen-year-olds at the same school. The movie has the structure of a comedy classic, but it doesn't have the rambunctiousness or the maniacal edge; the thinking is cramped and conventional. With Lea Thompson and Crispin Glover. (Reviewed in our issue of 7/29/85.) (Criterion Theatres. . . . ¶ Bleecker St. Cinema; through Dec. 26. . . . ¶ Olympia Quad; through Jan. 2.)

Badlands (1973)—Set at the end of the fifties, it's about an emotionless young killer (Martin Sheen) and his fifteen-year-old girlfriend (Sissy Spacek), whose killing spree starts in South Dakota. The young lovers are psychologically aberrant and yet just like everybody else; their moral vacuum spreads over the flat, dead landscape. The director, Terrence Malick, appears to be saying that mass-culture banality is killing our souls and making everybody affectless, but his detached tone puts the viewer in the ugly position of feeling culturally superior to the people on the screen. With Warren Oates. (Cinema Village; Jan. 3-4.)

The Beautiful Blonde from Bashful Bend (1949)—It's hard to believe that Preston Sturges wrote, produced, and directed this botched parody Western, but he was trying to recoup after the shattering critical and box-office failure of his most sophisticated slapstick comedy—the 1948 "Unfaithfully Yours"—and he seems to have lost his bearings totally. A hot-tempered barroom singer (Betty Grable) takes a shot at her rival for the affections of a cardsharp (Cesar Romero) and accidentally hits a judge (Porter Hall) in the rear end. She escapes from prison and goes to Snake City (populated with many of the Sturges regulars), where she pretends to be a schoolteacher named Hilda Swandumper. Sturges tries for the frantic comic atmosphere he got in "The Miracle of Morgan's Creek," but everything is mistimed and so appears to be broadly overplayed. The film was such a disaster that he was finished in Hollywood. His career as an American writer-director began and ended in the forties. Among the performers struggling desperately to be funny are Rudy Vallée, Olga San Juan, Sterling Holloway, El Brendel, Hugh Herbert, Margaret Hamilton, Esther Howard, J. Farrell MacDonald, Marie Windsor, Chester Conklin, Chris-Pin Martin, and Dewey Robinson. Sturges' only film in color. (Thalia SoHo; Dec. 30.)

The Bicycle Thief (1949)—The story of a poor man's search for his stolen bicycle is deceptively simple. At first, there is ironic tenderness: humanity observed with compassion but without illusion. Then the search becomes an odyssey of poverty, encompassing much more than the realistic method leads you to expect. And the richness and the enigmas sneak up on you. This neo-realist classic, directed by Vittorio De Sica and written by Cesare Zavattini, is on just about everybody's list of the greatest films. It isn't a movie that warms you, though; it doesn't have the flawed poetry that De Sica's "Shoeshine" and "Miracle in Milan" have. In Italian. (Thalia SoHo; Dec. 29. . . . ¶ Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 30.)

The Color Purple—With Whoopi Goldberg, directed by Steven Spielberg. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Beekman, R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Theatres.)

Days of Heaven (1978)—Terrence Malick wrote and directed this story of adultery, set principally in the wheat fields of the Texas Panhandle just before America entered the First World War. Richard Gere plays Bill, who works in a blast furnace in Chicago; he gets into a brawl with the foreman and heads south, taking his girl, Abby (Brooke Adams), and his twelve-year-old sister, Linda (Linda Manz), with him. They find work in the fields of a wealthy young farmer (Sam Shepard), who falls in love with Abby. When Bill learns that the farmer may be dying, he encourages Abby to marry him—so that she can soon be a rich widow. The movie is oblique, except for the narration, which is by Linda; she's a little-girl wise guy, and all the humor in the film comes from her laconic remarks. The film suffers from too many touches, too many ideas that don't grow out of anything organic. It's an epic pastiche. (Cinema Village; Jan. 3-4.)

La Dolce Vita (1960)—Each of the dozen or so sequences of this movie tells a separate story, and deals with a separate aspect of present-day Roman life—high, low, or café—as seen through the satiric eyes of Federico Fellini. His direction is masterly; his cast is splendid. In Italian. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 29.)

Freaks (1932)—The original ads quoted Louella Parsons, who said, "For pure sensationalism 'Freaks' tops any picture yet produced." She wasn't far off, and it's still a shocker. Though this circus story, directed by Tod Browning, is superficially sympathetic to the maimed and the mindless that it features, it uses images of physical deformity for their enormous potential of horror, and at the end, when the pinheads and the armless and legless creatures scurry about to revenge themselves on a normal woman (Olga Baclanova), the film becomes a true nightmare. If this film were a silent it might be harder to shake off, but the naïve, sentimental talk helps us keep our distance. With Leila Hyams, Wallace Ford, Harry and Daisy Earles, Johnny Eck (who had half a torso), Randion (known as the Living Torso), the Siamese twins Daisy and Violet Hilton, Roscoe Ates, Edward Brophy, and Henry Victor as the strong man. Adapted from the story "Spurs," by Tod Robbins. (Thalia; Jan. 2.)

Hamlet (1948)—Laurence Olivier produced and directed this fluid, handsome, satisfyingly paced version, and he himself is a witty and active platinum-blond Hamlet. It is a tribute to Shakespeare's passionate immediacy that everyone has his own idea of the play, and many will find much to quarrel with in this film. (For example, the soliloquies have been turned into interior monologues, which diminishes them.) But even if you feel that certain scenes should be done differently, when has the rest of the play been done so well? With Jean Simmons as Ophelia, Basil Sydney as the King, Eileen Herlie as the Queen, Stanley Holloway as the Grave Digger, Felix Aylmer as Polonius, Norman Wooland as Horatio, Terence Morgan as Laertes, Esmond Knight as Bernardo, Anthony Quayle as Marcellus, Harcourt Williams as First Player, and John Laurie as Francisco. (Cinema Village; Dec. 29.)

Hamlet (1969)—Bearded, and with a nasal twang, Nicol Williamson is a surly Hamlet, deliberately, wretchedly unattractive. Williamson's acting is all pathos and vituperation, snarls and tantrums, and he stares so much that he's in danger of wearing out his eyeballs. The tension is gone, because this Hamlet is not a man who is destroyed by the events we see and by his own divided feelings; he is weak at the outset. The play collapses not only as drama but as poetic drama—Hamlet's speeches, as Williamson delivers them, lack beauty. This movie, directed by Tony Richardson, isn't a reinterpretation of "Hamlet" but an exploitation of what's worst in Nicol Williamson as an actor; it isn't tragic or absurdist—it's just cheap Jacobean-Mod, sexed up whenever possible. Shot in the Round House, the old London engine shed converted into a theatre, where Richardson also staged the play, the film is done almost completely in oppressive closeups. There are a few fine moments: Roger Livesey's entrance with the players provides a touch of humanity; he is in beautiful cracked voice and fine music-hall spirit. And Anthony Hopkins is an appealing though very young Claudius—one rather wishes he were left in peace to rule the country, since Hamlet is obviously unfit. With Marianne Faithfull as Ophelia, Judy Parfitt as Gertrude, Gordon Jackson as Horatio, Mark Dignam as Polonius, and Michael Pennington as Laertes. Cinematography by Gerry Fisher. (Thalia; Jan. 1.)

Henry V (1944)—Shakespeare's "Henry V" is the story of the playboy Plantagenet who grew up to become a great leader and, at twenty-seven, defeated the armies of France at Agincourt. There, at the last major stand of medieval chivalry, the English archers, outnumbered five to one, cut down the fatally encumbered knights of France. Laurence

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Olivier once said that it was the sort of juvenile role that you can't play when you're a juvenile: "When you are young, you are too bashful to play a hero; you debunk it. It isn't until you're older that you can understand the pictorial beauty of heroism." He came to it at the right time. His production—it was his first time out as a film director—is a triumph of color, music, spectacle, and soaring heroic poetry, and, as actor, he brings lungs, exultation, and a bashful wit to the role. The film has true charm. With Renee Asherson as Princess Katherine, Leslie Banks as Chorus, George Robey as Falstaff, Esmond Knight as Fluellen, Leo Genn as the Constable of France, Felix Aylmer as the Archbishop of Canterbury, Niall MacGinnis as MacMorris, Robert Newton as Ancient Pistol, Harcourt Williams as Charles VI, Max Adrian as the Dauphin, Robert Helpmann as the Bishop of Ely, and Ernest Thesiger as the Duke of Berri. The music is by William Walton; the cinematography is by Robert Krasker and Jack Hildyard. (2 hours and 14 minutes.) (Cinema Village; Dec. 29.)

The Hidden Fortress (1958)—The setting is the Japanese civil wars of the sixteenth century, but Kurosawa appears to be influenced by John Ford in this stirring fairy-tale Western, with its fighting and clowning and horsemen escaping across the border. There's a treasure in gold, a princess in anachronistic-looking shorts, and Toshiro Mifune as a heroic general. In Japanese. (Metro Cinema; Jan. 1-4.)

101 Dalmatians (1961)—Late Disney, but for once not vulgar. This is most delicately drawn, with beautiful graphics of Nash's London and an entrancing espionage chain of dogs barking at one another from signal points across the island, like the beacon flares before the Armada. (Eastside Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, Guild, Embassy 72nd St., Olympia Quad, and Embassy 1.)

Jagged Edge—This thriller doesn't offer the pleasures of style, but it does the job. Jeff Bridges plays the San Francisco newspaper publisher-editor who is tried for the murder of his rich wife, who owned the paper; Peter Coyote is the D.A. prosecuting him; and Glenn Close is the radiantly blond woman lawyer who defends him, and falls in love with him. Working from a script by Joe Eszterhas that's smart, pared down, and efficient, the director, Richard Marquand, sets up the situations and delivers the payoffs; he doesn't show much in the way of imagination or devotion to craft, but he gets distinctively pungent performances. With Robert Loggia, Leigh Taylor-Young, Marshall Colt, and Karen Austin. (11/4/85) (Festival, Embassy 72nd St., and Olympia Quad. . . . ¶ New Embassy 49th St. Evening performances only.)

Kiss of the Spider Woman—Set in a nameless South American country, Hector Babenco's film is about a homosexual window dresser, Molina (William Hurt), and a revolutionary, Valentín (Raul Julia), who share a prison cell. Molina tries to comfort Valentín and help him forget his pain and misery by telling him the stories of old movies. Hurt is just about the only thing to look at; he's very likable in the scenes where Molina reveals his tenderness and warmth and humor. But it's a slack piece of moviemaking, and as sentimental as the forties screen romances that Molina is infatuated with. This Brazilian production, made in English, from Manuel Puig's novel, was shot in São Paulo. (8/26/85) (D. W. Griffith, Quad Cinema, and Lincoln Plaza.)

Miracle in Milan (1951)—Part social satire, part fantasy, this Vittorio De Sica film suggests a childlike view of Dostoyevski's "The Idiot." A fun-loving old lady finds a newborn baby in a cabbage patch. The baby becomes Toto the Good, the happy man who loves everyone; when he is frustrated in his desire to help people the old lady, now an angel, comes down and gives him the power to work miracles. Toto the hero, naïve and full of love, organizes a hobo shantytown into an ideal community, but the social contradictions are ludicrously hopeless—not even magic powers can resolve them. The failure of innocence here is touchingly absurd; the film is stylized poetry, and it is like nothing else that De Sica ever did. Francesco Golissano is perfect as Toto; the heroine, Brunella Bovo, is what Chaplin's heroines should have been but weren't. The film provides a beautiful role for that great, almost legendary lady of the Italian theatre, Emma Gramatica (many, many years before, she had taken over Duse's roles and acted under the direction of D'Annunzio); as the supremely silly old woman of De Sica's fairy tale, she is as yielding and permissive as his Umberto D. is proud and stubborn. With Paolo Stoppa as the unhappy man. Cesare Zavattini adapted his own novel, "Toto il Buono." In Italian. (Thalia SoHo; Dec. 29.)

The Mystery of the Wax Museum (1933)—Entertaining, grisly chiller, directed by Michael Curtiz and shot in an early Technicolor process, with the color contributing heavily to the general creepiness. Lionel Atwill is the murderous curator who pours hot wax over his manacled, still-living victims and then exhibits them as sculpture. With Glenda Farrell, Fay Wray, Gavin Gordon, Frank McHugh, Edwin Maxwell, and Arthur Edmund Carewe. From a play by Charles S. Belden. (Remade in 1953 in 3-D as "House of Wax," and probably the source of the 1959 "A Bucket of Blood.") (Thalia; Jan. 2.)

Out of Africa—With Robert Redford and Meryl Streep, directed by Sydney Pollack. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews Tower East, R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews State.)

Private Lives (1931)—Early talkie attempt at glittering theatrical sophistication, and somehow, in its own terms, it works. This M-G-M version of the Noël Coward play was made soon after the play came out, and perhaps the play's style and excitement carries the cast along. Norma Shearer isn't so bad, and Robert Montgomery is very, very good. Directed by Sidney Franklin. With Reginald Denny, Una Merkel, and, in a role added in the film, Jean Hersholt. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Dec. 31.)

Prizzi's Honor—This John Huston picture has a ripe and daring comic tone. It revels voluptuously in the murderous finagling of the members of a Brooklyn Mafia family, and rejoices in their scams. Jack Nicholson's average-guyness as Charley, the clan's enforcer, is the film's touchstone: this a baroque comedy about people who behave in ordinary ways in grotesque circumstances. Everything in this picture works with everything else—which is to say that John Huston has it all in the palm of his big, bony hand. With William Hickey, Anjelica Huston, Kathleen Turner, and John Randolph. (7/1/85) (Film Forum, and Cinema 3.)

Rambo: First Blood Part II—Audiences hoot at it and get a little charged up at the same time. The proceedings are directed by George P. Cosmatos, and he gives the near-psychotic material a veneer of professionalism, but the looniness is always there. The film's star and progenitor is Sylvester Stallone, and the way he's photographed he's huge—our national palooka. This humanoid Christ figure with brown leather skin and symmetrical scars goes into Vietnam and brings out a bunch of our missing-in-action men. With Julia Nickson, Richard Crenna, and Charles Napier. (6/17/85) (Criterion Theatres.)

Shoah—A documentary, directed by Claude Lanzmann. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Cinema Studio.)

Show Boat (1951)—The most lavish and least convincing of the three movie versions of Edna Ferber's novel, with the singing valentine Kathryn Grayson mangling the Jerome Kern songs. Marge and Gower Champion come through with some lively dancing, but almost everyone else sinks. Howard Keel is too good for what he's given to do. Ava Gardner (at her most beautiful as Julie) looks as if she's dying to parody her lines, and Joe E. Brown is allowed only one brief dance. With William Warfield, Robert Sterling, and a shameful performance by the miscast Agnes Moorehead. George Sidney directed. (Regency; Dec. 29-31.)

The Stunt Man (1980)—A virtuoso piece of kinetic moviemaking. Working with material that could, with a few false steps, have turned into a tony reality-and-illusion puzzle, the director, Richard Rush, has kept it all rowdy and funny—it's slapstick metaphysics. Steve Railsback is the fugitive who becomes a stunt man, and Peter O'Toole is the flamboyant, fire-eater director who, Railsback thinks, is out to kill him. Playing a protean figure—visionary, fierce-tempered, and ornery, yet ethereal and fey—O'Toole gives a peerless comic performance. With Allen Goorwitz, Barbara Hershey, and Sharon Farrell. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 3-4.)

Sunset Boulevard (1950)—A young scriptwriter (William Holden), speeding away from the finance-company men who have come to repossess his car, turns into a driveway on Sunset Boulevard and finds himself at the decaying mansion of the once-great silent star Norma Desmond (Gloria Swanson). Attended by her butler (Erich von Stroheim), who was once her husband and her director, she lives among the mementos of her past and plots her comeback in her own adaptation of "Salome." The rapacious old vamp persuades the young man to stay and work with her on the script; he becomes her kept man, her lover, her victim. The acting honors belong to Holden. When he makes love to the crazy, demanding old woman, his face shows a mixture of pity and guilt and nausea. This brittle satiric tribute to Hollywood's leopard-skin past is almost too clever, yet it's at its best in this cleverness and is slightly banal in the sequences dealing with a normal girl (Nancy Olson) and modern Hollywood. Billy Wilder directed. With Buster Keaton, H. B. Warner, Anna Q. Nilsson, Hedda Hopper, Cecil B. De Mille, Jack Webb, Fred Clark, and Lloyd Gough. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 3-4.)

Targets (1968)—Peter Bogdanovich wrote, directed, and appears in this lame melodrama about a clean-cut all-American boy (Tim O'Kelly) who turns sniper. The picture is rather naïvely made, and one begins to wait for the sniper to hit his targets, because there's nothing else of interest going on. Boris Karloff, in one of his last screen appearances, plays a veteran horror-film actor. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 3-4.)

Touch of Evil (1958)—As the madam of a Mexican bordello, Marlene Dietrich (done up in her gypsy makeup from "Golden Earrings" of 1947) greets the grotesquely oversized, padded, false-nosed Orson Welles with a glorious understatement—"You're a mess, honey. You've been eating too much candy." Welles' first American production in a decade, this marvellously garish thriller has something, but not very much, to do with drugs and police corruption in a border town. What it really has to do with is love of the film medium, and if Welles can't resist the candy of shadows and angles and baroque décor he turns it into stronger fare than most directors' solemn meat and potatoes. It's a terrific entertainment. The cast, assembled as perversely as in a nightmare, includes Charlton Heston, Joseph Calleia, Akim Tamiroff, Joseph Cotten, Zsa Zsa Gabor, Mercedes McCambridge, Janet Leigh, and Dennis Weaver. When the picture opened, it was 93 minutes long and some scenes were said to have been added that were directed by Harry Keller. This version, released in 1976, runs 108 minutes and is said to represent Welles' original intentions. (Cinema Village; Dec. 30-31.)

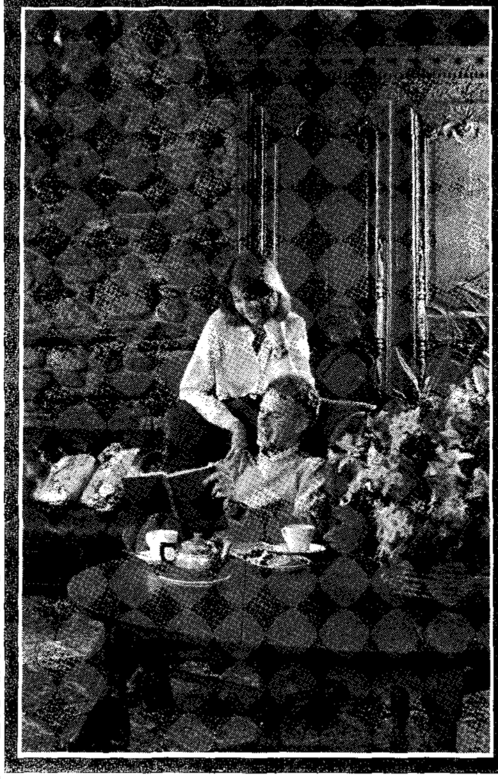
Twice in a Lifetime—This miracle of psychobanality presents the basic story of a long-married middle-aged man (Gene Hackman, as a Seattle steelworker) who experiences a renewal of vitality when he has an affair with a younger woman (Ann-Margret), but the story is now so dressed up in the language of self-help books that the man is a life-affirming force—and not only for himself but also for his wife of thirty years (Ellen Burstyn), whom he leaves. The movie could be every errant husband's self-justifying fantasy. Directed by Bud Yorkin, from a script by Colin Welland. With Amy Madigan, Brian Dennehy, and Ally Sheedy. (12/2/85) (Gemini, and Lincoln Plaza.)

Unfaithfully Yours (1948)—One of the most sophisticated slapstick comedies ever made, this classic, written and directed by Preston Sturges, got terrible reviews and failed at the box office. The hero, a symphony conductor, is played by Rex Harrison, who is at one of his comic peaks. During a concert, the conductor, convinced that his wife (Linda Darnell) has been unfaithful to him, fantasizes how he will handle the situation in three different ways, according to the style of the music on the program—Rossini's Overture to "Semiramide," the "Pilgrim's Chorus" from Wagner's "Tannhäuser," and Tchaikovsky's "Francesca da Rimini." After the concert, he tries to carry them out, scrambling them hopelessly. There are so many great lines and situations in this movie that writers and directors have been stealing from it for years. With Edgar Kennedy, Rudy Vallée, Kurt Kreuger, Barbara Lawrence, and Lionel Stander. (Thalia SoHo; Dec. 30.)

White Nights—The magnificent Mikhail Baryshnikov plays a Russian ballet star who defected from the Soviet Union to the U.S. and is on his way to dance in Tokyo when his plane crash-lands in Siberia. The movie's central gimmick is that the ballet dancer is put in the care of a black American tap dancer (Gregory Hines, acting morose and embittered) who defected from the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. The tap dancer is miserable, and now a K.G.B. colonel tells him that if he can't convince the ballet star to renounce the U.S. and perform in just a few days at a Kirov gala, he'll be sent to work in the mines. This cheap melodramatic plot is like a straitjacket that the director, Taylor Hackford, got into voluntarily and can't wriggle out of. It's often ludicrously bad, but there's enough footage of Baryshnikov to carry you past the embarrassments of the tacky script. With Isabella Rossellini, Jerzy Skolimowski, Geraldine Page, Helen Mirren, and John Glover. The script is credited to James Goldman and Eric Hughes. (11/18/85) (Baronet, and Ziegfeld.)

You Can't Take It with You (1938)—Jean Arthur, Lionel Barrymore, Edward Arnold, and James Stewart in a rather cumbersome adaptation of the light and fanciful Kaufman-Hart play. Directed by Frank Capra. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 1.)

You Were Never Lovelier (1942)—Fred Astaire and Rita Hayworth—with Astaire pursuing her by the route of her matchmaking father, played by Adolphe Menjou. Quite endearing, with tunes including "You Were Never Lovelier" itself, "Dearly Beloved," and "I'm Old-Fashioned." Directed by William A. Seiter. (Regency; Dec. 29-31.)



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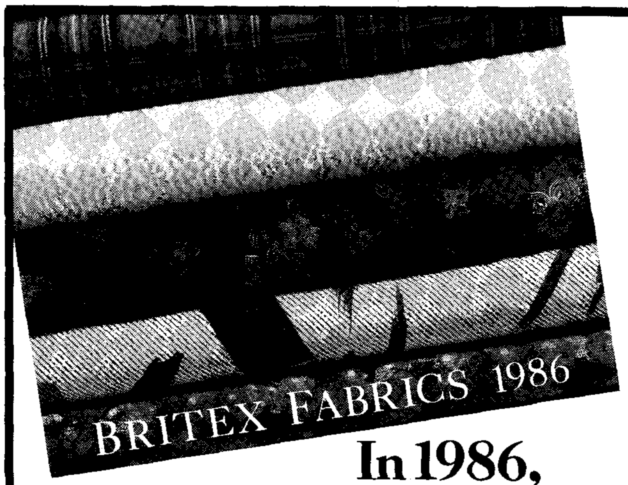

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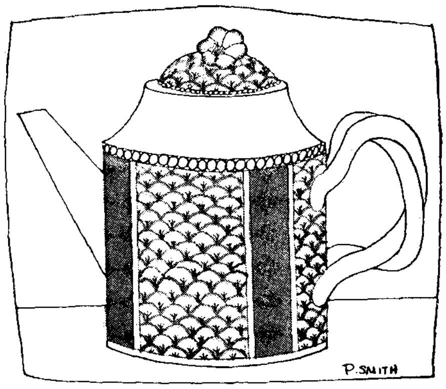
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

THE public elects the members of the two houses of Congress to make decisions in the public interest. The current officeholders, however, have found that to be impossible, at least insofar as the power of the purse is concerned, and so they have delegated the final responsibility for meeting this fundamental obligation of their branch of the government to a formula: the one in the recently passed Gramm-Rudman bill, which prescribes that if Congress and the White House in their ordinary deliberations and negotiations fail to achieve budget reductions of a certain size in each of the next six years, then uniform cuts in all but a few exempt programs will be effected. At the end of the process, the federal budget will supposedly have been brought into balance. In the light of this legislation, at least one old saw about politicians and power will have to be revised. It's said that politicians love power. The current crop of congressmen disproves the axiom. These congressmen shun power, and seek to slough it off onto an adding machine. The new axiom should be: Politicians love a good image, and will go to any lengths to get favorable publicity. And the exercise of governmental power has become dangerous to politicians' images. To govern is to choose; but to choose is to make yourself accountable for the consequences, and that can spoil even the most carefully cultivated image, and lead to electoral defeat. In a world governed by images, the exercise of power, you might say, becomes antithetical to holding power. The result is the paradoxical scene before our eyes: politicians who will do anything, including giving up their power, in order to remain "in power."

Of course, there is a background to all this. Most important, certainly, was the country's decision—resoundingly manifested in the forty-nine-state victory of President Reagan over Walter Mondale—not to permit higher taxes as a means of reducing the rocketing budget deficits of the Reagan years. But since the public showed equally little appetite for the large budget cuts that constituted the only other available means of reducing the deficit, politicians—or, at any rate, those who wished to avoid the fate of Mondale—were left with no immediate solution to the deficit which they dared offer. Gramm-Rudman is a deus ex machina designed to make the choices that the politicians are afraid to make. (Unlike the politicians themselves, it will not have to run for office next year or thereafter.) The members of Congress have, in effect, conjured up a kind of second, shadow Congress—one that will actually govern while the flesh-and-blood members, not burdened by any unpopular decisions, devote themselves full time to running for office. It's tempting to say that in doing all this the politicians (including the man in the White House, who has signed Gramm-Rudman into law) have shown a lack of leadership, but that would not be quite accurate. The politicians have led, and the people have followed—away from an understanding of our predicament and away from any resolve to deal with it. One needs only to recall the pathbreaking political advertising of recent years to realize how effectively we have been led in this unfortunate direction.



Just one question will remain if Congress stays on its present course, and that is what to do with the institution after it has abdicated its constitutional powers once and for all. Perhaps Capitol Hill could be turned into a national park—Congress World, or some such. There silver-haired senators would orate, "powerful committee chairmen" would wheel and deal, lobbyists would smoke cigars and "roam the halls" (for some reason, lobbyists, like buffalo, always "roam," never walk), aides would whisper in "the Senator's" ear. Civics classes could come and watch. And, as a last stop on the tour, they could visit the computer in the basement which was governing the United States.

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IN the middle of the pregame show whooping it up for the Super Bowl this January, in some of the primest of prime time, when every minute of advertising on NBC, which will broadcast the game, will cost four hundred thousand dollars (during the game itself the price will be one million one hundred thousand dollars), there will be a minute of silence. The executive producer of NBC Sports thought it would "just be nice." (Regrettably, the minute will be subtracted from program time rather than advertising time, and NBC will not actually forfeit any revenue.) Except for a clock that will show the seconds elapsing, so that people can get back to the screen in time from whatever they are doing with their minute of freedom, the screen will be empty. Never before, as far as we know, has a commercial television station invited its viewers actually to *leave* the set. Any invitation of that kind, it was probably feared, might break the set's grip on its viewers, and send them away indefinitely. And, in fact, when one reflects on the silent minute for a little while it's hard not to think revolutionary thoughts. The average American, astonishingly, watches television for more than seven hours a day. Faced with that statistic, one likes to imagine longer periods of silence—hours, days, months, years—and not just on one channel but on all of them. We don't know what people used to do with the seven hours that they now spend watching television, but it must be that an abundance of human activities have been stilled in television's cool light. (Though most black-and-white television sets have been replaced by color sets now, the viewers and their rooms somehow remain bathed in the same spectral, colorless moonglow.) Every parent knows the tremendous enervating power of television. The children may be racing around, they may be yelling, they may be fighting, they may be tearing up the furniture, but only switch on the television and all that is stopped cold—overmastered by the spell of the set. The power of the medium can be deduced from the extent of the riot that it displaces. Parents know, too, the unease, even the bad conscience, that they feel when they use television to quiet their children, no matter how welcome the ensuing peace is. What television can do to children is turn them off. But what does it do to a whole people? And what would people do if the images on their screens one day flickered out? They might possibly reach for a book, but, frankly, we doubt it. A great deal has been said about the possible harmful effects of television on literacy, and much of it may be right, yet surely the deeper influence of this pervasive medium is not on reading but on talking—for those who are watching and listening seven hours a day cannot be having conversations with one another during those hours. The bent of our time is for centralization, and now we appear to have centralized speech itself—to have lifted much of the burden and the pleasure of talking from individuals and handed it over to central authorities, who flood the airwaves with by far the most voluminous spate of sponsored, monitored, organized talking that the world has ever been exposed to. We know that a country that stops reading is in trouble, but we have yet to find out what eventually happens to a country that goes mute. When the minute of silence falls in the pregame show, we don't expect profound conversations to start up all around the country, but silence itself, which used to be called golden, will be a gift. For a moment, the country will have been returned to itself.

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Turtle

A FRIEND who lives in Westchester writes:

One evening a couple of weeks ago, I got a call from my cousin-in-law Andy, who lives across the Sound from us, in Locust Valley. He had just been taking his new sea kayak out for a spin. Sea kayaking, he tells me, is big in places like Seattle, and it is starting to catch on in the East. Andy told me that he had got off work early that day (he's a carpenter), thrown the kayak on the roof of his Peugeot, driven up to Bayville, and put in at the town beach, Stehli Beach. He was hoping to get in a three- or four-mile paddle before dark. But just as he was heading out he noticed something round bobbing in the surf—an animal of some kind, hanging limp. It looked dead. At first, he thought that it was a horseshoe crab, but as he drew near he saw that it was a turtle. "You know how it is when you see something you aren't expecting at all," he told me. "I kept trying to make it into a horseshoe crab, but it stayed a turtle."

Andy said he knew enough about turtles to tell that it wasn't a snapper. "What would a snapping turtle be doing in salt water, anyway?" he asked himself. He lifted the turtle gently out of the water on his paddle. It felt like about five pounds—pretty heavy, considering that its carapace, the upper half of its shell, was less than twelve inches in diameter. The carapace was coated with fuzzy green algae, which meant that the turtle had been immobile for some time. The shell and the head, tail, and flippered legs radiating from the shell were all pale greenish brown. The scutes, or plates, on the turtle's skull were edged in white. Its blue-gray eyes, Andy said, "were just slightly open, and kind of sunken and cloudy." The underpart of the shell, the plastron, was also somewhat sunken. "It seemed to be in starving condition," he said. He concluded that it was a sea turtle, a juvenile that had come to a premature end in cold seas far from home. What in the world was it doing up here, he wondered.

Thinking that the turtle was dead, Andy laid it on the sand and went off in his kayak for about twenty minutes, until it was too dark to see much beyond the bow. When he returned, he picked up the turtle to take another look at it. Suddenly, as he turned it over in his hands, one of its legs twitched. It was still alive! Andy wondered what to do. He couldn't just leave the turtle there. Maybe something could be done for it. He decided to take it home and get in touch with the authorities, whoever they were. And, this way, Erika, his three-year-old daughter, would get to see it, he realized with pleasure as he drove home.

When he got home, Andy put the turtle in a cardboard box, and while Erika studied it, wide-eyed, he called the New York Aquarium, in Brooklyn, but the Aquarium had closed for the day. Then he recalled that I used to go out with a girl who was deeply into sea turtles, and he called me. "Wow!" I said. "A sea turtle! I didn't know they got up here. Hang on a sec." I got down my copy of the "Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Reptiles and Amphibians" and looked up the green turtle, which was what this one sounded like. It said that Atlantic greens range in the ocean's warm waters, "occasionally reaching New England." "I'd say very occasionally," I told Andy. "You'd better report this right away." I gave him the name of a local authority on turtles, and asked him to keep me posted. A bit later, Andy reported that he had called the turtle authority, who had told him that the turtle was in cold shock. Under no circumstances should it be placed in warm water, because the sudden change of temperature could kill it. The best thing to do was to let it warm up naturally. There was no point in trying to feed it, because it wasn't going to be interested in food for a while. And in the morning Andy should be sure to call the Aquarium. Marine turtles are protected, the authority explained, and if Andy didn't turn it in he could be fined ten thousand dollars and sent to prison for a year.

The next morning, Andy called the Aquarium and was put in touch with an outfit called the Okeanos Ocean Research Foundation, in Hampton Bays—the state representative of the Northeast Regional Stranding Network, which works to save marine mammals and sea turtles. Later in the morning, a man from Okeanos came to see the turtle, and took it off Andy's hands. After several hours, he learned from the research director of Okeanos, Samuel S. Sadove, that it wasn't a green turtle, it was a Kemp's ridley, and that four other Kemp's ridleys had washed up along the North Shore that week.

"A Kemp's ridley!" I said when Andy called to bring me up to date. "That's even more amazing. The Kemp's ridley is the rarest sea turtle in the world. I think there are supposed to be only about a thousand breeding females left." I had the number of Archie Carr, the grand old man of sea-turtle research, who lives in Micanopy, Florida; he had helped me with a book that I wrote about Florida in the early seventies. I called the number, and he answered. I asked if he had heard about the ridleys that had been turning up on Long Island. Carr said I was about the tenth person to tell him the news. It was Carr, I now learned, who had given the ridley its name. "Ridley" was what local fishermen he questioned about sea turtles from Key West to New Orleans back in the thirties had said that this particular species was called. Carr had tried in vain to find out what the word "ridley" meant. It has since occurred to me that it might have something to do with the species' irascible disposition, for Carr added, "Ridleys are mean-natured. When you get them in a boat, they glower, snap, thrash, and raise hell." In the eighteen-seventies, Carr said, several specimens of the Atlantic species were sent to Harvard by a man from Key West named Richard M. Kemp. There is a related species, the olive ridley, in the Pacific. Both are highly endangered. The Kemp's ridley is critically endangered. It's down to about four hundred nesters per season.

Carr went on to tell me that he had been equally unsuccessful in his attempts to find the ridley's nesting beach, although he'd hunted for it for eighteen years, beginning in the late twenties. Finally, in 1947, the beach was found. It was on the Gulf Coast of Mexico, below Brownsville, Texas, and ninety miles above Tampico, at a place called Rancho Nuevo. That year, a Mexican photographer filmed about forty thousand ridleys coming out to lay or waiting in the surf at Rancho Nuevo, and a man who saw the film notified Carr. But the days of such thrilling *arribadas*, as these events are called, were numbered. There was a clamorous demand for ridley eggs, because they were believed to have aphrodisiacal properties. In the years following the Second World War, the eggs were removed by the million, and one could find a bowl of them on almost any bar in Mexico. Eventually, after years of campaigning, Carr and others got the Mexican government to put a stop to the senseless egg trade. At very nearly the final hour, in the mid-sixties, the remaining ridleys were protected. Today, the beach at Rancho Nuevo is guarded during the nesting months by Mexican marines and young volunteers from this country. Each female ridley squats over a hole she has dug and drops about a hundred eggs into it. The eggs are unearthed and put in a hatchery to protect them from poachers. For the last eight years, there has been a project to establish a second nesting beach, on Padre Island, Texas, with eggs flown up from Rancho Nuevo. Nobody knows yet whether this is going to work—whether the hatchlings that leave Padre Island are going to return there. Nobody even knows when ridleys reach reproductive age. Green turtles do not reproduce until they are perhaps fifty. Carr said he wouldn't be surprised if it took ridleys fifteen years to come back and nest.

What happens between the time the silver-dollar-size hatchlings crawl down to the water and the time dinner-plate-size ridleys, like Andy's turtle, start to show up on the Gulf Coast of Florida is also unknown. The little turtles are whisked away by the Gulf Stream. One turned up off the

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Azores early in this century; occasionally, yearlings are found along the Atlantic coast of Europe.

I called Sadove to discuss the incident and find out how the turtle was doing. Sadove said there are a couple of possible explanations for the presence of the sea turtles—thirty-six ridleys, three loggerheads, and three Atlantic greens—that have been found in the Sound so far this fall. (1) What are called warm-core eddies branch off from the Gulf Stream and are precipitated into the shallow harbors of New England; as Carr once put it, "they bust off meanders and get slopped up on the continental shelf." The turtles were perhaps trapped in one, and then, a couple of weeks ago—it's been a long, mild fall—the water went cold. That would mean that the turtles were suddenly in desperate trouble, soon stopped feeding, and went into cold shock. (2) Some of the turtles were found near one of the North Shore's power plants. Maybe a plume of warm water from it held the turtles there, and then they drifted into cold water.

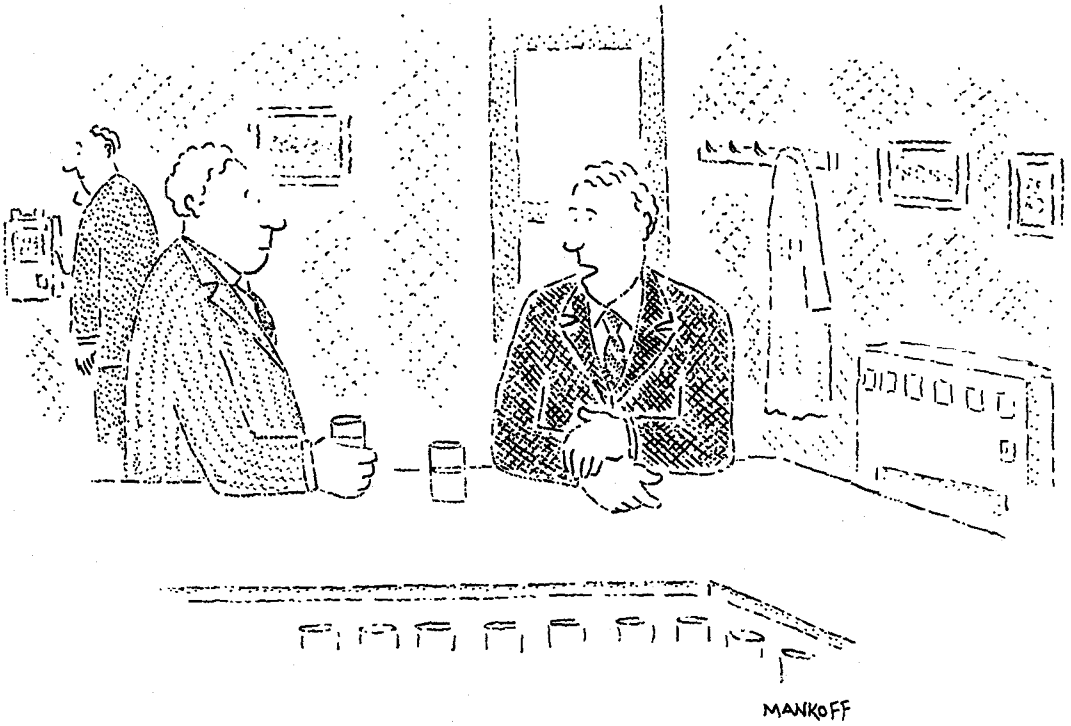
Andy's turtle, Sadove went on, was the biggest of the lot. As soon as it came into Okeanos's stranding center, it was put in a containment tub with seawater, and the water was slowly brought up to sixty-five degrees. Two days later, a man named Bob Schoelkopf picked up the ridley, along with two others, and drove them down to the Marine Mammal Stranding Center, in Brigantine, New Jersey. There they were placed in a heated indoor pool, where they could swim around and get used to being out of cold shock. After three days, the turtles were force-fed squid and clams, and a few days later they were tagged and driven down to Atlantic City and put on a Sterling Charter Group flight to Fort Lauderdale. (The company generously provides a block of seats whenever sea turtles have to be reintroduced.) At Fort Lauderdale, a representative of the National Marine Fisheries Service met the turtles and drove them to the service's Miami laboratory. Two days later, they were driven down to Key Largo and released into Florida Bay. Schoelkopf, who is the director of the Brigantine Stranding Center, believes in holding wild animals as short a time as possible. He said that Andy's turtle "should be enjoying the sunshine by now." Sadove urges anybody who finds a Kemp's ridley or any other sea turtle to call—collect—the hot line for strandings: 1-516 728-8013.

Optional

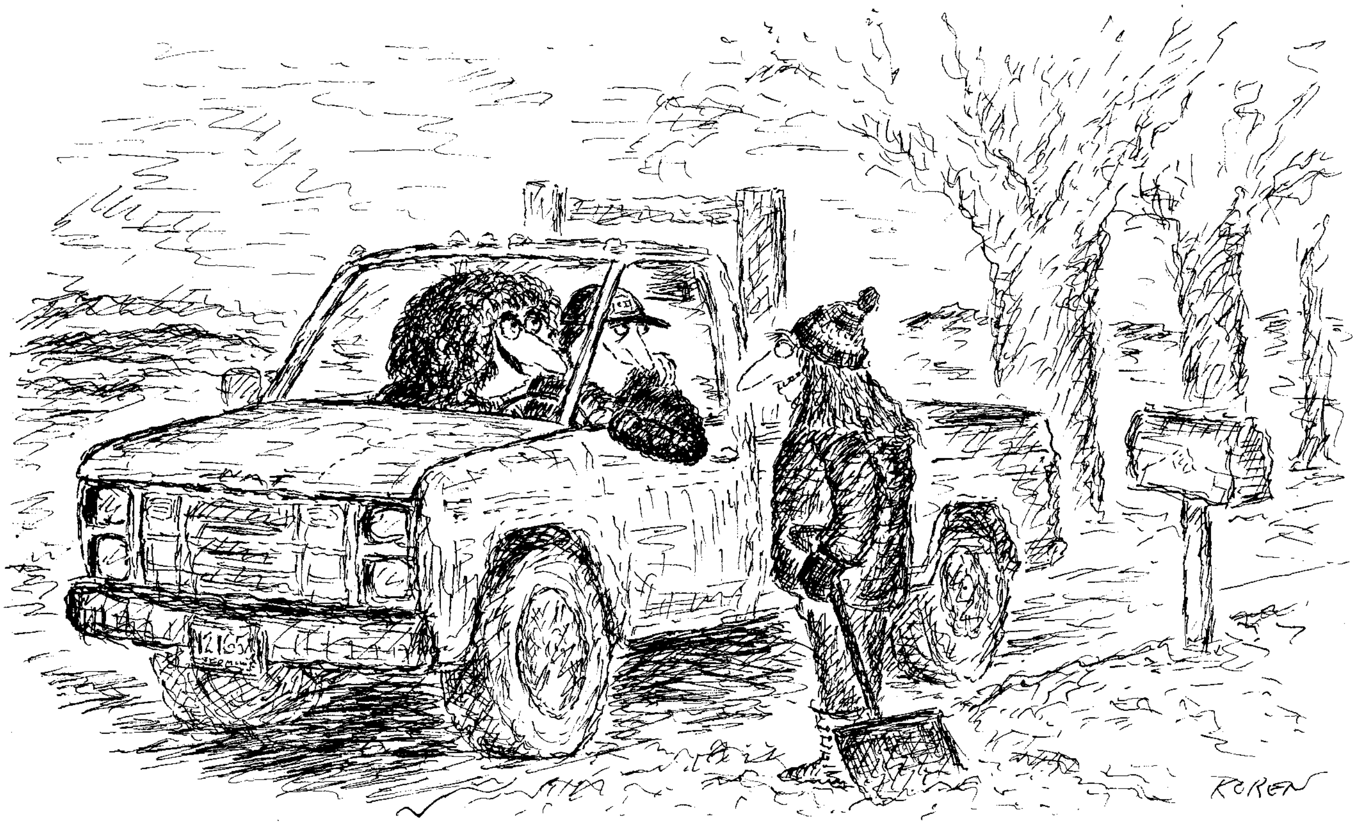
FROM midtown, you take the Lincoln Tunnel to Route 3 West, in Jersey—past Secaucus, the Hackensack River, and the Meadowlands Sports Complex—until you pick up Route 17 North, navigating through rain and fog so nasty you can barely see the Burger King just ahead, much less Manhattan over your shoulder. After the Burger King, there's a Roy Rogers and then B.J.'s Wholesale Club, the Leather Warehouse outlet store, Backus Machine Works, the Derby Diner, and every brand of automobile dealership you can think of. You keep going, past the turnoffs for Wood-Ridge and Moonachie, past the Eclipse Lanes, the Maltese Pool Service, Trader Horn Appliance Store, Bruce the Bed King, and the Progressive Brick Company, until, finally, there's the light at Franklin Avenue, where you make a right and follow the signs for the Aviation Hall of Fame of New Jersey and the Bergen County Animal Shelter (*not* the signs for Felician College; if you turn left instead of right, you'll get lost and miss what comes next).

Teterboro Airport is straight ahead. Make a left turn, and on the right you see Atlantic Aviation Hangar No. 3, where a white Gulfstream II twin-engine jet with orange-and-burgundy stripes and gleaming aluminum trim and "N99VA" lettered in orange on both engines and the tail has just touched down and parked. N99VA belongs to a real-estate genius from Wichita named George Ablah. Somebody has fallen down on the job, because the limousines that should have met the plane have not materialized. George Ablah—his friends call him Little George—wears a peach shirt and black slacks and carries a brown leather briefcase, and he is out on the tarmac in the rain, looking for a lift. Four women, including Little George's wife, Virginia—all impervious to the weather, because, wisely, they are covered in fur—come down the plane's stairway. Some furless men follow. There is not too ghastly a delay before cars show up to take the Ablahs and their friends to the Waldorf.

The plane will not go to the Waldorf. The plane will stay right here, with Mike Sweet and Will Williamson and Dan Burford, until the Ablahs and their friends get done with New York City and are ready to fly home to Wichita. Now is a good time to go upstairs and look inside. Mike and Will



"Oh, I'm happy enough—I just wish my life were more like Sting's."



"Kate, this is the wonderful man I told you about who has such a strong hand with garlic and fresh thyme."

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are pilots, and Dan is a flight attendant. You need two pilots to fly a Gulfstream II; the flight attendant is optional. Here is some other optional stuff: the big Christmas wreath at the top of the stairs; the shrub-size arrangement of white poinsettias in the center of the cabin; the continuous holiday music that Dan has programmed; the orange vinyl weatherproof mat that has been laid on top of the exquisite handwoven carpeting; the plush apricot sofa and the plush gray easy chairs; the floor-to-ceiling mirrors; the armrests on the plush apricot sofa; the 18k.-gold beverage coasters that have been countersunk into the armrests; and the 18k.-gold seat-belt clasps.

"Christmas was our theme for this trip," says Dan Burford, who was one of at least a hundred people interviewed for the flight attendant's job.

Also optional: the two-foot-high white marble Rodin sculpture near the forward bulkhead; the polished bronze Brancusi head on the pedestal next to the apricot sofa (across the aisle from the poinsettias and the three-and-a-half-foot-high bronze Marini); the two Henry Moores and the Arp near the rear wall of the passenger compartment; the Botero in the galley (next to the chips and dip); and the Giacometti in the bathroom. These constitute the Ablah G-II Sculpture Collection.

Dan uses a small cordless vacuum cleaner to tidy up, and, along the way, chats. "Everything that looks like gold is gold," he says. "Of course, the Rodin is made out of marble, and you have that piece of art in the lavatory, and you're welcome to stop back there. We have TV or stereo or a VCR. Would you care to see a movie?" Each seat is wired so that you can plug in a headset and enjoy whatever it is you care to enjoy without disturbing the other passengers. If you're a guest of the Ablahs, the headsets and the refreshments and the in-flight entertainment and the flight itself are *free!* If you're the Ablahs, it all costs five thousand dollars an hour.

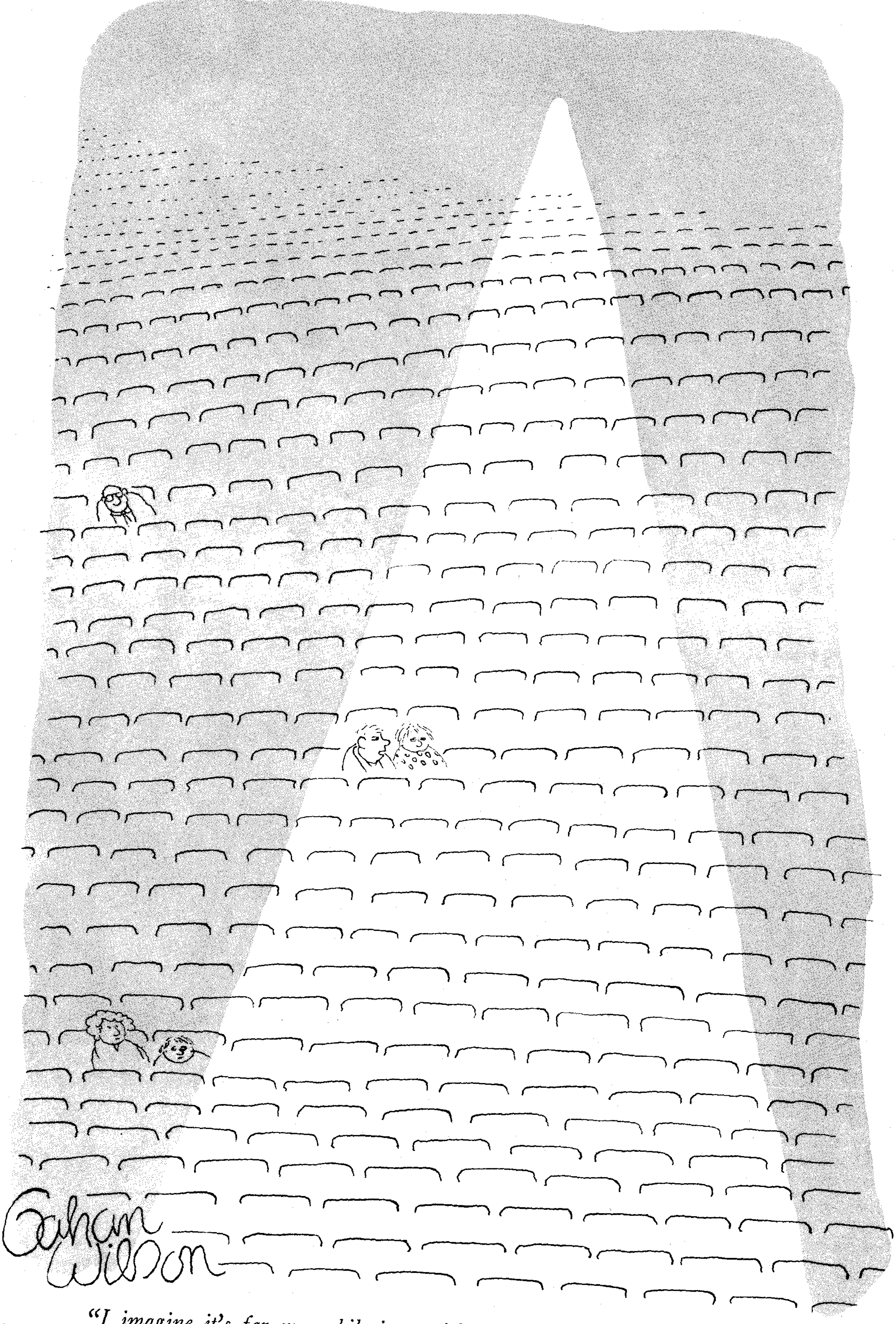
Mike Sweet has been George Ablah's pilot since 1974. He says, "If ever there was a perfect guy to fly, it's George Ablah. George is the greatest guy to work for that ever was."

The Rodin sculpture is the piece of art in the plane that Mike likes best. "When you're walking up to the plane at night, you see her in the window," he says. "With the cabin lights turned on, she's breathtaking. She's my favorite."

Two new telephones were installed in the cabin last month. Until something else comes along, they will be the state of the art in high-altitude telephone technology. You just pick up the phone, dial 1 and the area code and the number you want, wait until someone answers, and start talking. You can hardly tell you're on a plane. George Ablah uses the phones all the time, because when he's airborne he's almost always working.

"I've got a job to do in the front of the airplane," says Mike Sweet. "And George has a job to do in the back of the plane. If I screw up, he's gone. And if he screws up, I'm gone."

It takes more than Little George, Mike, Will, and Dan to keep N99VA in shape. N99VA is not just a tidy plane, it's spotless. "There's a full-time guy who does nothing but clean the outside," Mike says. "Twelve hundred bucks a month just for wiping down the outside—that's not bad. Well, that isn't really his only job. He's in Wichita right now, cleaning our cars. They've got snow on them."



“I imagine it’s far more hilarious with a theatreful of laughing people.”

AFTER THE READING

Col. Moammar Khadafy only comes out in the gun-black night with a Russian Kalishnikov rifle slung over his shoulder and a bandoleer around his waist.

The colonel has been known to prowl the streets of his capital, shooting slugs from his AK-47 through the brain of any prostitutes or nightclub performers he can find.

The mad Libyan who outlawed booze, dice, and adultery and cuts off the hands of thieves is also a published author.—*The Post.*

LADIES and gentlemen, Colonel Khadafy has graciously agreed to stay and autograph books and answer a few questions. Please line up behind the microphone in either aisle.

Colonel, Virginia Woolf once said that a writer needs a room of his or her own and five hundred pounds a year. Would you comment?

I think Virginia was on to something. You absolutely need a quiet place all to yourself. At a certain stage in my life, I considered moving to a farm and learning to vibrate with the small rhythms of the natural world. But the blazing desert sun, and all the sand—very little grew. Now I have a nice corner in the Hall of Justice for my desk. But no window. If you have a window, you stare out of it.

I met you once in B. Dalton—the one in Wau el Kabir. What advice can you give young writers?

Well, besides the obvious—no booze, dice, or adultery—I'd have to say that they should never steal. A writer needs many things—a conscience, a *voice*—but mostly he needs his hands.

Your haiku:

Camels—desert frigates—
Never gulp, merely sip.
Shoot them in the brain.

What does it mean?

It doesn't *mean* anything. Poetry, good poetry, isn't *about* something. You might as well ask "What does a bird mean? What is a Mirage jet fighter about?"

Why is your work so full of violent images?

I reject labels. If my work seems violent, it is because we live in a violent world. We try to forget this—we try to wrap our age in plastic and spray it with antiseptic. But men don't change. Papa knew this, knew it too well. In the end— But it's too hard to talk about Papa. Let's talk about Mailer. You've read his essay "The White Negro"? "A stench of fear has come out of every pore of American life, and we suffer from a collective failure of nerve." I know what you're thinking—the Vietnam syndrome. But that was written in 1957!

When do you find the time to write, now that you are a head of state?

I find I am freshest in the early morning.

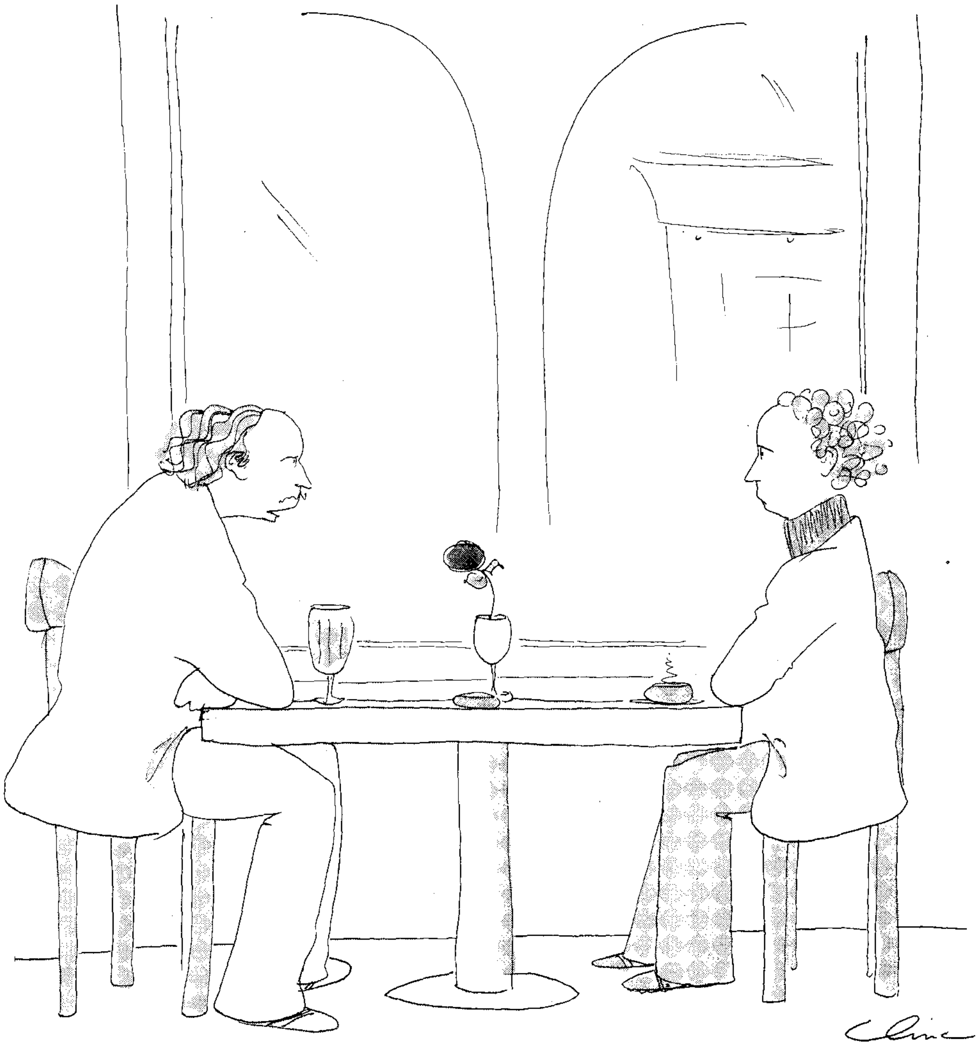
I'm just starting out—I had a story in last month's "Gulf of Sidra Review," about my mother. But I'm worried. What can fame do to a writer?

Fame can be the greatest trap of all, because it is the most comfortable. Let me tell you a story. A few weeks ago, on a publicity tour, I was doing Merv. He's syndicated now, not network, but we go back a long way, so I stopped by. I'm waiting in the greenroom to go on, and all of a sudden Joey Heatherton pops in. Normally, I would have shot her in the brain without even thinking. But you begin to move in that world long enough and you start to lose touch with your authentic self. Your roots, pulled out of their native sand, begin to wither. My first thought when I saw her was to ask if she'd been in Vegas lately and how was Shecky. But if you lose yourself you're over as a writer. I made myself shoot her. And then Charo minces in. "No speeky dee English?" I ask her. Kerpow.

As a beginning writer, do I need a word processor?

This is the question I hear most frequently, and it's one, unfortunately, for which I have no easy answer. On the one hand, a computer can't laugh, it can't shed tears, it can't shed blood—not yet, anyway. It won't turn bad writing into good. But I'd find it hard to go back to using a typewriter, I must say. The ease with which you can move paragraphs, the total elimination of retyping! If you can afford one, buy it. But you don't need the 512 K top-of-the-line model, not unless you're writing a Civil War saga, brother against brother. Two hundred and fifty-six K is plenty.

—BILL MCKIBBEN



"But does she let you live in your world?"

BOYFRIENDS AND GIRLFRIENDS

KEMSHILL COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION organized "social evenings" for every second Saturday during the winter months. Couples were encouraged to bring their children—a gesture that was unpopular with some but welcomed by most, especially by teen-age girls still too young for permission to travel to dance halls; they looked after the children between six-thirty and seven-thirty, when whist, which bored them, was played. Nine o'clock was a late hour for children to stay up in those days, the late nineteen-forties. Postwar social change, an earnest gaiety, a sober optimism filtered through to places like Kemshill—places that are minor, perhaps, but where more of the world lives than the headlines and passions of history would have us believe.

A drummer, an accordionist, and a saxophonist struck up music for dancing after the tables and chairs had been cleared to the sides of the hall. Mr. Hogg, who organized these evenings, sprinkled rosin on the floor to give the dancers a footing. For us children this provided the best fun of all: no one minded when, a sausage roll in one hand and a cake in the other, we tested the floor with sliding. Known as "the purvey," the sausage rolls and cakes lay on long wooden baker's trays on a trellis table at one end of the hall, beside the tea urns and a crate of lemonade bottles.

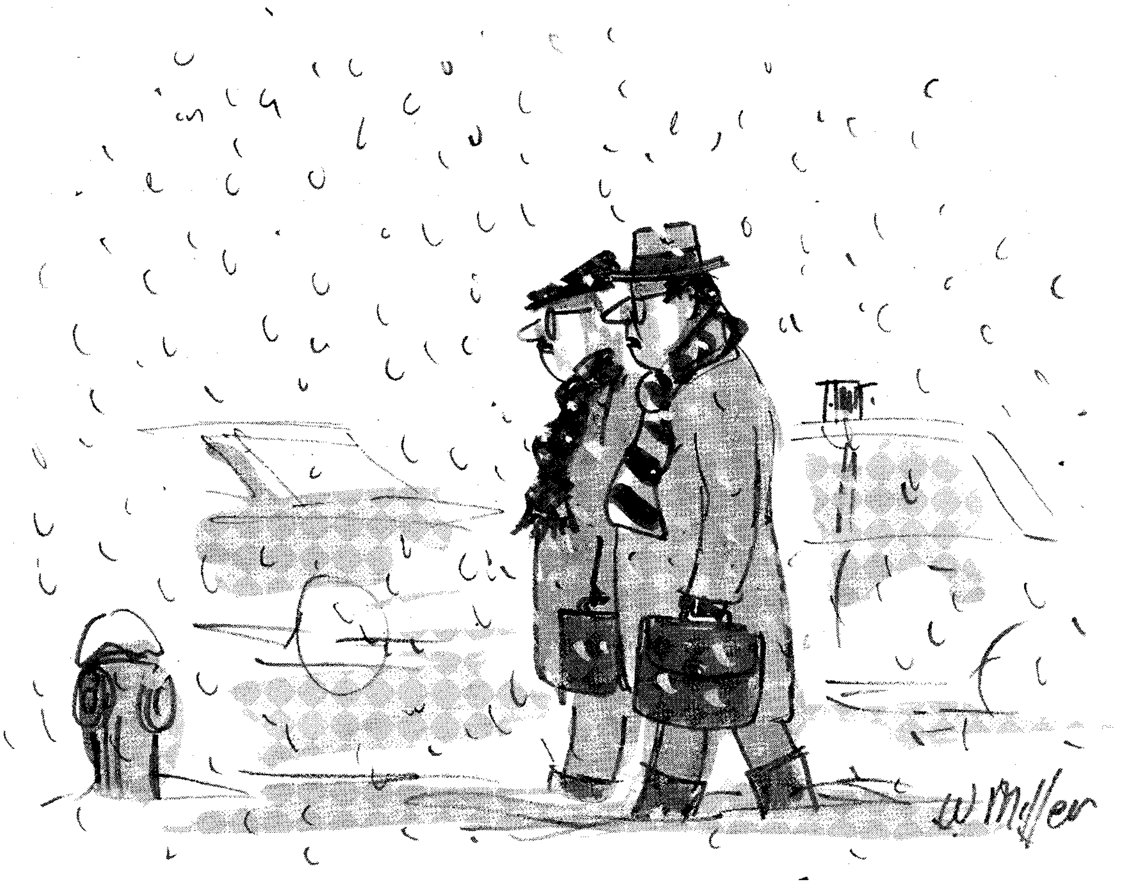
We would sit at the side, listening to the band, watching our parents dance to "Heartaches," "I'll Never Smile Again," "Fascination." Sometimes, without actually asking, Dorothy Gordon made it plain that she wanted me to dance with her. That ten-year-old couple made a mess of it. I was all heels, knees, and elbows, and so was Dot Gordon, except that she was too proud to admit it.

Dot's mother was a war widow, a melancholy, short-tempered woman with dark hair. One Saturday night she burst into tears during a slow dance in the arms of Ralph Harvie, who had known her husband. For a moment, it did not surprise me; many of the tunes that our parents hummed or sang as they smiled and stepped around the hall sounded very sad. Their cadences probed wordlessly into a life of which I knew nothing. (Either that or the trio on the platform were miserable.) Yet just as often the sadness was dispelled: "Deep Purple" and "Remember Me" gave way to "Puttin' on the Ritz" or Scottish dances. At the sound, the old wifies gathered by the tea urns perked up and trotted to the floor, calling on elderly husbands, who knew these dances and no others.

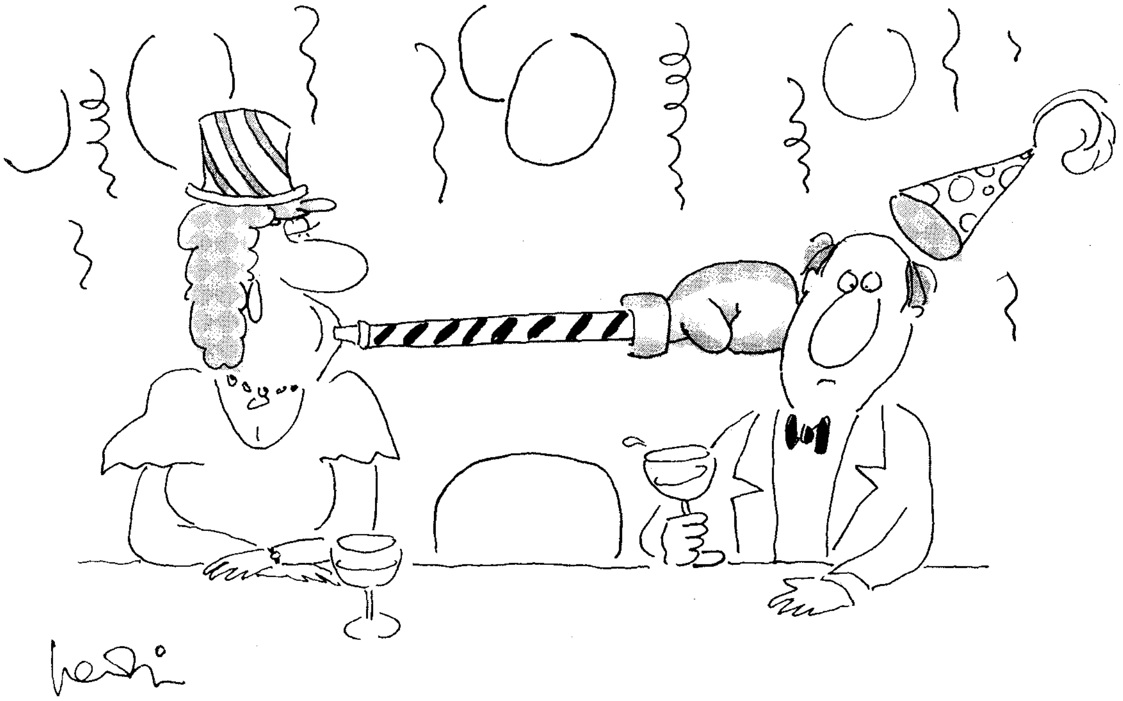
But maybe it wasn't the music that made Dot's mother cry. Ralph Harvie must have said something to her; they were talking and she ended up in tears. Women led her off the floor, and one of them threw an accusing glance at Ralph, who smiled with cautious embarrassment. My father was among the men who sat down with him. Ralph seemed to be explaining himself, and my father patted him on the back with a kind, sympathetic smile, much like the one he wore when he told Bert Nelson how sorry he was to hear about his mother.

Pity, concern, subdued anger, and disguised anxiety—the whispers around the hall were unmistakably troubled. Even at my age, some native sense told me that something was going on, but that juvenile curiosity would be met with a reprimand or a lie. Dot looked worried, but she was put out, too; she resented the concern that was directed at her. No one was dancing. The musicians were talking among themselves. Mr. Hogg beckoned urgently to them; I heard him say, "Play something foot-tapping, for God's sake! You're being paid to cheer us up!"

IRENE GORDON was a tragedy of the place. History and change intruded on Kemshill as much as anywhere else, if, perhaps, a little later, and they were as readily accepted, criticized, or rejected, or all three at once; but Irene Gordon, with her prestige as the only woman in Kemshill widowed by the Second World War—her daughter the only child made fatherless—was Kemshill's measure



"No two flakes are alike. It almost makes you want to believe in something."



of great events. She was a statistic of sorrow; she was a favored citizen. Women whose own men had also been in uniform must have looked at her and thought, There but for the grace of God. She was Kemshill's casualty.

Without going so far as to wear her Sunday best, Mrs. Gordon would smarten herself up when she went to the post office to collect her widow's pension. Her usual style was one of principled shabbiness, so it was noticed when she did up her hair, put on a hat or a head scarf, and left her customary dilapidation behind for an hour or two. The post office was little more than a hut almost a mile from Kemshill, halfway to Overrigg and next to the railway station that in those days served both villages and now serves neither.

During school holidays, we children often played on a hill that overlooked the Overrigg road. Sometimes we saw Mrs. Gordon walking along the narrow pavement. When Dot spotted her mother, she used to leave us and run down the sloping field, shouting and waving. For all her calling, Dot had usually reached the hedge by the roadside before Irene Gordon noticed her.

"I could brain that man Harvie," I heard my mother tell my father. "He pesters poor Irene Gordon, and it's not just when he tries to dance her on a Saturday night. Some of the men round here ought to have a word with him." My father scowled, but she went on. "She doesn't want him. Why can't he take no for an answer?"

"I've heard of nothing that could be held against Ralph," my father said.

"You have now, because I've told you."

"Irene could do worse—a lot worse. The only woman he ever wanted, and she shuts herself up in the past! It's six years since Lawrie Gordon died!"

For almost a year, there was a probationary armistice between Dot's mother and Ralph Harvie. In the spring, she let him look after her badly neglected garden. So far, convention had prevented a local man from volunteering to rehabilitate the unruly place. A brother would have been appropriate, but Irene had none; of her two brothers-in-law, one—married to her sister—lived in Glasgow and did what he could on their several yearly visits, but he knew nothing about gardens. Her dead husband's brother lived nearby in Overrigg, but he never showed his face, and was disparaged in Kemshill as a man who failed in his responsibilities toward kin. A hand from a married friend of the deceased would have been respectable, as long as his wife visited the widow while her husband forked and spaded. But Ralph Harvie was an unmarried man, whose fond designs on Irene were common knowledge; when Irene allowed him to trim the high privet hedge in front of her house, the town took it as a sign of his progress with her. It became the occasion for benign gossip.

Ralph transformed the garden. He took the squeak out of Dot's swing and oiled every hinge on the premises. He painted the gate, repaired the fence, and planted the earth in anticipation of a harvest.

Ralph was a tall, slow, good-natured, and pleasant man in his thirties. He had big gray-green eyes and enormous hands. "Ralph's onions are usually so-so," my father once said, "but he grows the best leeks in the village. He keeps his mother's table well provided." Like many men in Kemshill, my father associated gardening with decency. "Hitler was no gardener. I'll tell you that for nothing. That's a *fact*."

For all the conversations that people in Kemshill exchanged on the subject of Ralph's wooing, Ralph Harvie and Irene Gordon said little to each other. I played in the Gordons' garden almost every day—Dot was my best friend—so I had some picture of things there. Mrs. Gordon would make tea for Ralph and bring it outside in a white enamel mug, but they seldom spoke, and when they did it was not for long, or about anything but the garden. Ralph never entered the house while I was there. If he did at any other time, I'd judge he would have knocked first on the door and then gone no farther than the kitchen. She used to place the tea mug on the doorstep outside the kitchen, and they'd exchange their few words there. Ralph Harvie scraped what was left of the worn and blistered paint from the three stone steps; fresh white paint took its place—broad parallel stripes on either side of the hollowed treads. At the time I thought it insignificant, the work he devoted to those steps, but now I don't.

My mother admitted that she might have been wrong about Ralph. "It's a big step for a woman to take. But maybe it'll be a while longer before Irene's ready."

"They haven't been out together," my father remarked. "Suggest to Irene that you'd look after the girl if she and Ralph wanted to go to the pictures."

My mother looked askance at my father in his role as go-between. Whatever might be said in my father's favor—many things—as a romancer he was a diehard Presbyterian.

Dot Gordon had fair hair, and skin so light it seemed you could see the blood through it. Eager, energetic, nimble, she could make the crossover from girls' games to tree-climbing and apple-raiding with a naturalness that made the vigor of other tomboys look forced by comparison. Most of the girls around Dot's age did not like her, perhaps because she shunned the leadership they extended to her as her right. Boys distrusted her: she ran too fast, climbed with sure feet, and refused to admire bravado or take second place.

Once, when she and I were playing together at the humpbacked sandstone bridge that carried a minor road over the Kem Burn, a car stopped and a middle-aged couple got out and leaned on the parapet to watch us float bits of stick on the water. "That's the most beautiful child I've ever seen," I heard the woman say in melancholy praise.

Dot ignored them. The woman called "Cooee!" to attract our attention. When I started to make for the bridge, she shouted to me, "Is that your sister?" I said no, and she asked me to tell Dot to come over to her.

Dot put down the twig she was using to guide a piece of wood on the water and went to her. A herd of cattle was kept in the field there. On both sides of the Kem there were slopes of trodden, muddy, and ungrassed ground where the cows came down to the water's edge to drink. A scab of dried cowpat floated past, and as it neared the bridge, where the current picked up speed, the sun slid from behind a cloud and turned the cowpat golden. The bridge looked so old that I thought I could hear it flake and crumble into the radiant gurgle of the stream.

"She gave me a half crown, and a shilling for you," Dot said when she came back to me, confused by these gifts. She looked at the coins in the palm of her hand, puzzled by the disparity between them, and then looked back toward the car, whose doors we heard closing. She gave me the half crown. I gave it back to her. "Don't you want it?" she asked.

MY-NESS

"My parents, my husband, my brother, my sister."
I am listening in a cafeteria at breakfast.
The women's voices rustle, fulfill themselves
In a ritual no doubt necessary.
I glance sidelong at their moving lips
And I delight in being here on earth
For one more moment, with them, here on earth,
To celebrate our tiny, tiny my-ness.

—Czeslaw Milosz

(*Translated, from the Polish, by the author and Robert Hass.*)

• •

"You said she gave it to you."

"Money from strangers!" Dot spoke with bewilderment. I took the shilling; a child could get a lot for a shilling in those days. "She said I was the prettiest girl she'd ever seen! I was terrified!" Dot giggled. She looked at the large silver coin. She bit on it. Together, we ran to the roadside where the car was pulling away. The woman was drying her eyes on a handkerchief. It was an all-important mystery—the woman crying, the money, the couple we had never seen before.

For the next hour, we scavenged for more imaginary boats to sail, and discussed how to spend our windfalls.

"If we go to Edwina Gregg's shop, she's bound to ask where we got the money from," I said. "Same with the Co-op. But they wouldn't care in the post office."

"Mrs. Graham's in the post office," Dot said, "and she knows me. She'll wonder how my mother could've given me a half crown."

"It's not a lot of money!"

"You should know by now, Alec, that my mother doesn't have *any* money!"

"Well, I get a shilling a week."

"I know you do, and you've already spent it, so Edwina Gregg would *know*. We'll have to walk to Overrigg, tomorrow," Dot said.

Dot was invited to stay for tea at our house. In fact, she stayed until past nine o'clock, when my father walked her home. For several weeks, Dot stayed all evening on Mondays and Fridays.

At first, I took it for granted that Dot's visits were the outcome of my father's idea of providing Mrs. Gordon with some free evenings for Ralph. But as far as I know, Irene Gordon never went to the pictures or anywhere else with Ralph Harvie. Early in July, he stopped looking after the garden. Dot was mysterious on the subject. When I asked where he was, she said sharply, "How should I know?"

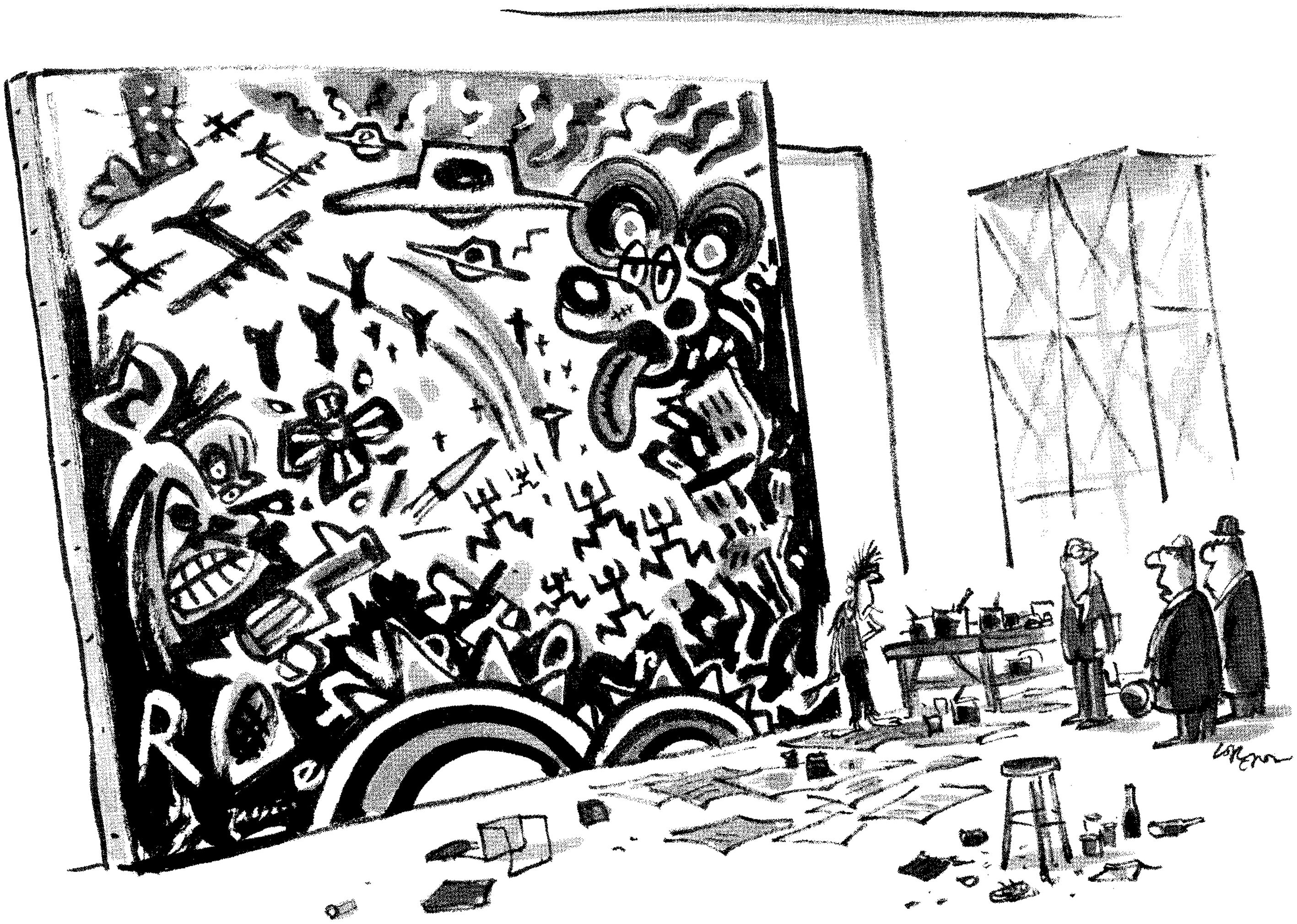
I never mentioned this to my parents. But one night when he came back from walking Dot home, I heard my father say, "That Glasgow man has a car. I think it's a Riley." From his tone I gathered that a Riley was quite a car.

"I feel sorry for Ralph," said my mother.

"First you call him names for persevering, and now you're sorry for the man? Where did Irene meet this new fellow, anyhow? If you ask me, we shouldn't be looking after Dot while her mother's seeing somebody else!"

My father sounded angry. Genuine concern that Irene Gordon should have a second chance was being forced to fight it out with loyalty to a local man he liked.

"All she told me was she'd met somebody nice, and that she wanted to go out with him," my mother said. "I



"Powerful, but does it say executive dining room?"

• •

don't know what he does for a living. I don't know his name." She sounded as upset as my father, but she seemed to be defending Mrs. Gordon. "And don't ask me where he comes from, because I don't know that, either."

Most women were of the same mind as my mother: they would have been happier to see Irene Gordon accept Ralph, but they admitted with sisterly approval that she had a right to her feelings. Discretion or family ties required some women to take Ralph Harvie's side. A few were scandalized. They accused my mother of harming Ralph by looking after Dot on those evenings.

"I thought it *was* Ralph! Why else would I have offered to keep an eye on Dorothy? And how could I refuse when I found it wasn't?"

Information about Mrs. Gordon's boyfriend was gathered piece by piece in Kemshill. Some of it came from me. Dot told me that she had met him, that his name was Clifford Peake, and that he was English. She had kept this news to herself for long enough—that was the impression I got from the way she blurted it out. Several times I had seen women ill-disposed to her mother turn neighborly charm on Dot, hoping for snippets of fact that her mother had ordered her to keep quiet.

She and I laughed at the strange, highfalutin English name. "He has a mustache," Dot cried, "and you should see the ring he's got! On this finger. It has a red stone."

My father obviously disapproved of my indiscretion when I started to repeat what Dot confided in me—I could tell by the way he opened his mouth to speak, though he postponed it when my mother looked at him with a nod that told him to shut up. "You're as curious as I am," she told him. After that, I refused to divulge what I knew, but they prized it out of me. I told them about the mustache, the ring with the red stone, the man's name.

My mother had already reached the decision that to look after Dorothy would be to implicate herself in the mistake she felt Irene Gordon was making. She had gone to Dot's mother and told her she could no longer help.

Several evenings of the week by then, Clifford Peake's car could be seen parked at a tilt on the bank across the lane from the Gordons' house. On those occasions when Mrs. Gordon went out with him, it was to Glasgow, where they dropped Dot off with her aunt and uncle. Dot used to boast about Peake's car, its speed, its upholstery. She talked excitedly about the city. Some days she didn't turn up at school, because she was still in Glasgow. Mrs. Gordon no longer shopped in the village. People said she didn't dare show her face in Edwina Gregg's shop or the Co-operative. They prophesied that very soon the Gordons would be moving. They reminisced about Mrs. Gordon's parents, and mentioned her mother-in-law, still alive in Overrigg; the word "if" could be heard on doorsteps, in conversations at corners and outside the shops, in my parents' living room.

Those evenings when Dot had stayed to tea with us, she used to play my mother's piano. My mother could read music a bit, but she couldn't play by ear. Dot could pick up a tune from hearing it, but slowly, and my mother used to sit at the piano with her, teaching her popular songs. It was at these times, I think, that I first detected a change in Dot's behavior. Always vivacious, she now began to look controlled and pert; her sense of fun seemed less irrepressible and spontaneous, and she appeared conscious of the effect she wanted to make. She had never been shy, but now she seemed willing to affect a charming timidity.

She seemed to have a superior adventure in her life. All of a sudden, she was being whisked off to Glasgow in a fancy car, treated with presents of sweets, new clothes, books, and a bicycle that was too conspicuous for her mother to let her ride it through Kemshill. From having nothing and a sorrowful mother, Dot found herself with plenty, while Irene Gordon dressed smartly and was cheerful, if apprehensive of what Kemshill was saying about her. Dot still turned up to play in my garden, and it didn't take much persuasion for me to go and play in hers. My mother warned me, "I don't want you there if that man turns up. As soon as you see his car, clear off. Is that understood?"

IT'S not certain who first passed on the news that Clifford Peake was a married man. Dot never told me that, and I doubt whether she would have told anyone else, even if she knew. My father said the talk would have originated in Overrigg. "Bad news always starts in Overrigg. I used to think that Hitler might've been an Overrigg man, but I grant you that even Overrigg men aren't *that* bad. Nearly, though."

"This is serious!" my mother protested.

"It's worse'n that," my father said, with a smile that disguised his feelings.

From the way my mother bit her lip and her eyes moistened, I gathered that it was the end of the world for Irene Gordon.

But the news seemed to make no difference to Mrs. Gordon. If anything, it elicited a courage, or barefacedness, that drove her to visit Kemshill's two shops after an absence of several weeks, and to allow Dot to ride her bicycle wherever she pleased. Clifford Peake's Riley was parked there almost every night now. Dot had a day off school again—she was in Glasgow, with her aunt and uncle—but the car was noticed outside the Gordons' house that next morning. A few days later, Dot asked my mother if she could stay for tea.

"Did your mummy ask you to ask, Dorothy?"

"Yes, she was wondering, Mrs. Haddow."

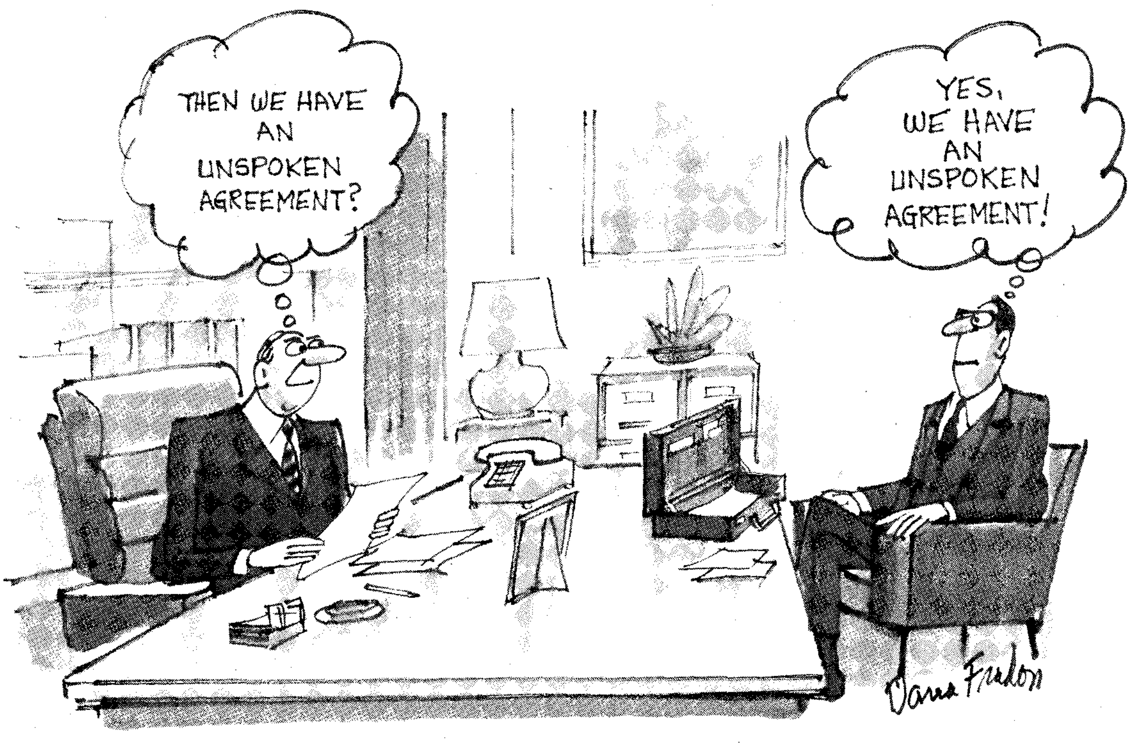
My mother bit her lower lip and said, "Wait here with Alec, dear. I'll go and speak to your mother."

My mother was embarrassed, but Dot's smile was hard and worldly. When my mother reappeared with her coat on, Dot said, "If you don't want me to stay, Mrs. Haddow, just say so, and save yourself a walk." It sounded impertinent—the remark of a girl older than her eleven years. Worse, to my mother, was that it declared how much Dot knew about what was going on.

Clifford Peake never drove through Kemshill when he went to the Gordons' house or left it at night. He took the narrow back lane that ran past the house and met up with the main road less than a half mile farther on. It was a poorly maintained road, worn thin by agricultural traffic; on summer afternoons around five, it was impassable, jammed with driven cattle, sauntering herd boys, and their ill-natured dogs. Most of the time, though, it was deserted. Where the lane joined the main road, the junction was concealed by hedges raised on banks of earth.

Ralph Harvie waited there late one mild, wet October night. When Peake's car stopped at the dark junction, readying itself to nose into the main road, Ralph stepped forward, opened the driver's door, and pulled Peake out.

GENTLE, amiable Ralph Harvie—everyone made a point of saying that they had never known him to raise his voice, let alone his hand. I read the newspaper reports and listened to my par-


THEN WE HAVE AN UNSPOKEN AGREEMENT?
YES, WE HAVE AN UNSPOKEN AGREEMENT!

ents talk. The papers said Peake's head was crushed, not by one unlucky blow but by several. And Ralph himself had called for the ambulance, before waking the local policeman. But, like everyone else in Kemshill, my father refused to believe that Ralph Harvie had left his mother's house that night with thoughts of murder on his mind. In my father's analysis, all Ralph meant to do was warn the fellow off.

"The wrench they're talking about—it must have been in Peake's car. Peake could have come at him with it! Who'd believe that Ralph—of all people!—would lie in wait for a man, wi' a wrench, intent on braining him?"

MAGIC
WANDS
$1.99
D. Reilly

Whatever Ralph meant, events had run out of control. He was strong; he worked in the loading bay at the Rathett Paper Mill. My father expressed the gravity of the matter with his fierce and native "Ach, ach, ach!"

We were involved: my parents had looked after Dot while her mother went out with Clifford Peake. Two detectives and a uniformed policeman turned up on our doorstep. They were cross-checking dates that Mrs. Gordon had given them. I was told to sit in the kitchen, but our house was small, and I could hear without having to put my ear against the door.

"I've known Ralph Harvie for years, and he's not a killer. I'll tell you that for nothing!" My father was always telling people things "for nothing." I had never heard him speak with such anger as when he protested against going to Glasgow to testify for the prosecution.

"It's the law, Mr. Haddow." The detective's voice was bored with my father's assertions. "The Procurator Fiscal might want your evidence in court. You're the man who can verify what Mrs. Gordon's said."

"Me? On the other side from Ralph Harvie?" My father's laugh, rough and incredulous, taunted the policemen.

"A man's dead, Mr. Haddow!"

• •

IRENE GORDON took Dot and went to her sister's in Glasgow for the duration of the trial. It was well she stayed clear of Kemshill—those who objected to Mrs. Gordon's choice of a lover were vociferous in heaping the blame on her head. Anyone who had granted her freedom to choose now changed his mind. But, being devoted to Dot, I was tormented by not seeing her, or knowing what she felt. Something had changed between us, something that no adult platitude or juvenile insight could utter clearly.

Ralph was sentenced to hang. The town was outraged. On appeal, the sentence was reduced to life imprisonment, and Kemshill was still angry. Laws were held in contempt. A neighbor of ours struck his wife, who left him. The local constable was ostracized, and had to be replaced. His stout adolescent son, known as Biscuit Belly, was beaten up behind the bus shelter, and he named the boys who did it.

The townsfolk went over the case in detail until the subject was exhausted. "Ralph's mother can't take it in." "That poor Mrs. Peake—what a story to hear told in a court!" "This village was never in the papers—now look at us! Irene Gordon's seen to that!"

"They're laughing at Kemshill in Overrigg," my father said. "But then, that's what they're like in Overrigg. They've always been jealous."

Dot and Mrs. Gordon came back after the trial. Dot told me they would have stayed on longer with her aunt, but the two women argued all the time, and her uncle threw the Gordons out.

Tall, cream-colored curds rose on the bolted seedstalks of the Gordons' rhubarb that next summer. Left unharvested the previous fall, vegetables that Ralph had planted reseeded themselves, and now they ran wild; Irene Gordon had dug up no more than a handful of potatoes, and let the weeds smother the rest of the garden.

It was good to have Dot back again; I had been convinced she was gone for good. And despite the feeling in Kemshill, my mother encouraged me not to turn my back on Dot. For her own part, she sometimes gave me a basket of produce to pass on to Mrs. Gordon, but these discreet kindnesses were as far as she would go. For the moment, she could not bring herself to resurrect their old friendship, although I imagine there were times when she thought she should.

I remember Dot's mother, that autumn, hanging her washing in the rain, tramping down the overgrown wet grass to get at her weathered clothes ropes. It could hang there for days on end. Whenever she saw me, she scowled.

No one spoke to Mrs. Gordon in the street. Shabby, unkempt, she looked the way she had before Peake arrived in her life—or she in his, however it was. To do her irregular errands, she ran the gantlet of the houses and entered the furnace of Edwina Gregg's little shop. Some animosity fell on Dot from the young people, too, but she turned up her nose at the hostility and walked away. She seemed undamaged by the drama that afflicted her house. Her young dignity seemed very grownup to me. Neither she nor her mother seemed to mourn Clifford Peake. Ironically, the village that had deplored her interest in Peake was now incensed at her present indifference.

"I think she should move," my mother said. "It would be better for her and everyone else."

"Overrigg would have her," my father said, and my mother frowned at his flippancy.

"Lawrie Gordon's brother lives in Overrigg," she pointed out, "and his mother, too—old Mrs. Gordon. That's hardly a fresh start!"

"Now, if they'd done what family should've done in Irene's circumstances, all this might never've happened."

"Were you a friend of Dot's dad?" I asked him once.

"I knew Lawrie, but I wasn't a pal. Anybody wi' any sense waited to be called up, but no' Lawrie Gordon—he volunteered the minute the war started. Dorothy would've been a year old. He was on leave for two or three weeks, and then he was off to the Far East. And that was that."

SECONDARY school separated me from Dot. We went to the same school, in a town ten miles away, but she made new friends; none of them were from anywhere around Kemshill. On the bus home one day, she told me, "We might be moving, Alec. My mum's been to see a flat in Glasgow."

"Soon? I don't think I'd like living in Glasgow."

"Oh, no, it's wonderful! I used to love staying with my aunt and uncle! Now they're just as bad as the people here. They need somebody to blame, other than the man who actually did it." There was no bitterness in her voice, only experience.

HAPPY NEW YEAR
TO ALL

But indecision, indolence, and depression kept Irene Gordon in Kemshill. Often when I called to see Dot, she was not there but visiting her new friends in the town where we went to school. When I did find her at home, we used to sit in the kitchen, and her mother would pass silently in and out, chain-smoking and brewing endless cups of tea—she put twice as many leaves in the pot as my mother did. Only occasionally—say, if the mobile shop from Overrigg sounded its horn on the lane outside—she would perk up, animated by an event that snapped her out of her contemplative lethargy. The house was a mess: unwashed dishes and piles of laundry cluttered the kitchen, and the table was never cleared. On it there was a breadboard, and what was left of a loaf. Stale crumbs spilled over the plastic tablecloth, with its holes at each corner

CAMELLIAS

Something with claws, with trap-spring teeth
honed, shining where leaves peel
back from midnight's folds,
is intent and desperate beyond
the imagination where I look,
howled awake: a few
luscious petals suddenly are shaken,
so I think guilt always
keeps just behind the heart.
In beauty something is jerking a small other
apart, breaking the slight bones,
the cross-stitched sinews,
a tongue drawn like a shaving knife, abandoned
where it hunches. Nothing answers
either, only the silence hiding
the scream that came,
pitiful as the nightmare in the ear
of the lover. It is
no decent hour but I ease from bed-cool,
step down the blind corridor
with my nakedness swaying, then
paw for the switch. Harms I might do rise
like a funnel of gnats when I throw
the light of astonishment over the yards,
into bedrooms, but I heave
light as easily as the sun out hunting.
Instantly something clenches
the earth, digs in, doesn't
bolt, but waits to see, mouth partly open,
the tiny tongue in the throat,
the throat as well, disguised and pink
as the unfolded, dewy crenellations
of camellias. It is all framed
by the flawless black meat of fur coiled
upon itself like night-after-night.

—DAVE SMITH

• •

"Ah, the iceman cometh."

• •

where triangles of wooden table peeped through.

"Look at the state she lets this place get into!" Dot said to me. "She's always complaining about it. I do my best, but look at it! Half the time she hardly knows I'm here. She forgets things. Well, when you think of it, what's she got to remember?"

Again, there was no resentment in Dot's voice as she described her mother's incompetence. Any mild indignation she might feel she made part of this comic state of affairs; it was as if Dot laughed at her own circumstances, disapproving of the near-squalor of her house and yet accepting it—one more feature of her life that made her different from the rest of us.

OVER the next three years, I suppose I called on Dot a half-dozen times a year, finding her at home less often than not. It was a friendship I was unable to let go.

Dot was a figure at school; she was bright, and she was theatrical and lively. She was known for mimicry and music, playing the piano at lunch hour in the Senior Girls' Common Room, hammering out the hit tunes of the day.

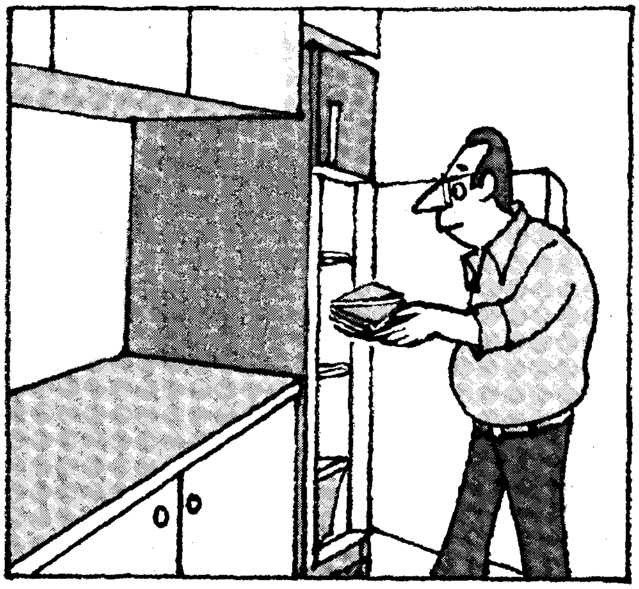
When I succeeded in visiting her, I saw that Dot's mother took no interest in her progress at school. Instead, she seemed to take it for granted that her sixteen-year-old daughter would be cleverer than most. I noticed an arrogance in the way Irene Gordon lived with her misfortunes and poverty. There was a calculating sneer, too, in the way she looked at me. Her contempt was puzzling. Perhaps she saw me as a representative of my mother, her former friend. When she asked about my mother, she looked at me coldly. Maybe she meant me to feel that she considered my mother disloyal. But there was more to Irene Gordon's bitterness than that. Everyone else in Kemshill walked past the Gordons' house as if it did not exist, or as if they considered it a place blighted and effaced from the map.

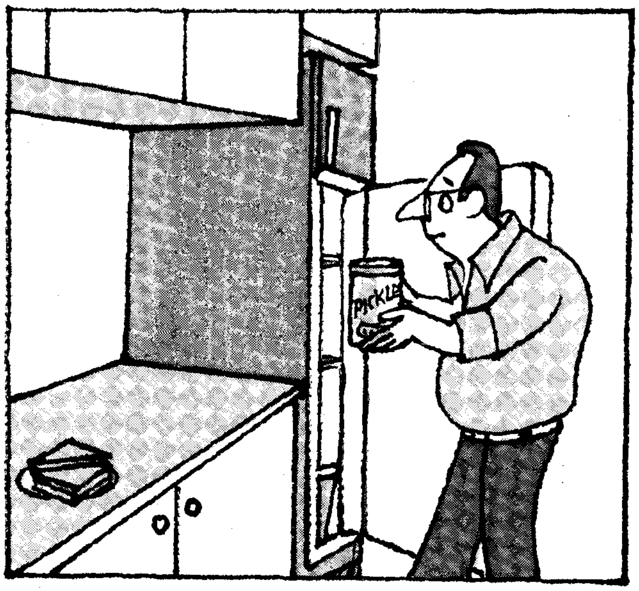
When I saw Dot now, it was usually on the bus home from school. As we got off one day deep in a conversation she had started, I asked, "Does she ever mention your father?"

"You certainly pick your moments, Alec!"

We were crossing the road opposite where Ralph Harvie had killed Clifford Peake. I apologized, and Dot laughed at my sincerity and poor timing.

"I'll tell you how to start a new scandal," Dot whispered mischievously. "If you're seen carrying my satchel up the road . . ." She nodded toward the hedge; behind it, an un-





identifiable figure was scything grass. "No, she never mentions my father, or hardly ever. I wish I could remember him, though. I can't say I ever knew him."

IRENE GORDON was forty—Dot and I were in our final year at school—when she started to work, in the canteen at the Rathett Paper Mill. My father raised his eyebrows and showed the palms of his hands to Heaven—or the ceiling—as he groaned at the woman's irresponsible folly: that was where Ralph Harvie had worked, and he had friends there.

Dot hated her mother's newfound jauntiness. "I don't want to talk about it!" she said, when all I did was mention that the kitchen had been redecorated. "The last thing I want's my mother making more bad feeling in this place when I'm getting ready to sit exams!"

"I don't see how you can be angry . . ."

"Look, no one can say that my mother's done much for me. We've hardly had two pennies to rub together since I was born. There was plenty of money, once—you know who I'm talking about. But she never took the trouble to earn anything before. I'll tell you why she's taken that particular job: she's trying to make life worse than it already is. It's taken her four or five years to figure out how to go about it. What's she *doing*?"

"Everybody says your mother's looking much better."

"Huh! *Everybody says!*"

"Honest, I think they're genuine. You should be glad that maybe they're willing to change their minds—"

"They don't know what to think," Dot said.

In the canteen, Mrs. Gordon encountered a customer who discovered who she was. He asked sly questions about how Ralph was getting along. Some reports claimed that she was slow to retaliate; others said that she endured the man's provocation for less than a minute before she lost her temper. There was a violent scene, and the management invited Mrs. Gordon to lift her insurance card and other papers and leave their employ.

When I passed the news to my father, he looked up from his gladiola bed—two dozen emergent shoots, neatly labelled—and listened. "I'm sorry to hear it, but I can't say I'm surprised. That's why she went there." He brushed aside my questions as to what he meant and how he knew.

I went to see Dot, worried about this new development. "There are other jobs! There are plenty of jobs!" her mother told me gaily. "You can tell your saintly mother that I'm not sorry about what happened. And tell her I won't need her baskets of vegetables this year. I can look after myself. Tell her I've changed in a way she wouldn't even understand!"

There were parcels on the kitchen table. Irene Gordon began to untie one of them. Dot turned abruptly away. I sensed that the two had been quarrelling before I arrived. "Wouldn't you say I've been hard done by, Alec?" Mrs. Gordon demanded.

"I think you should keep Alec out of this," Dot said from the sink.

"I'm talking to you, Alec! Hard done by—wouldn't you say so?"

I agreed with her.

Dot rushed up behind me and began pushing me toward the door.

"Don't you send him away, Dorothy! Alec, you arrived in the nick of time! I was about ready to wring her neck!" she cried.

Dot went back to the sink. Her mother dragged a dress from its parcel. Tissue paper floated in the room and settled on the floor as Mrs. Gordon held the dress against her. "What do you think, Dorothy?"

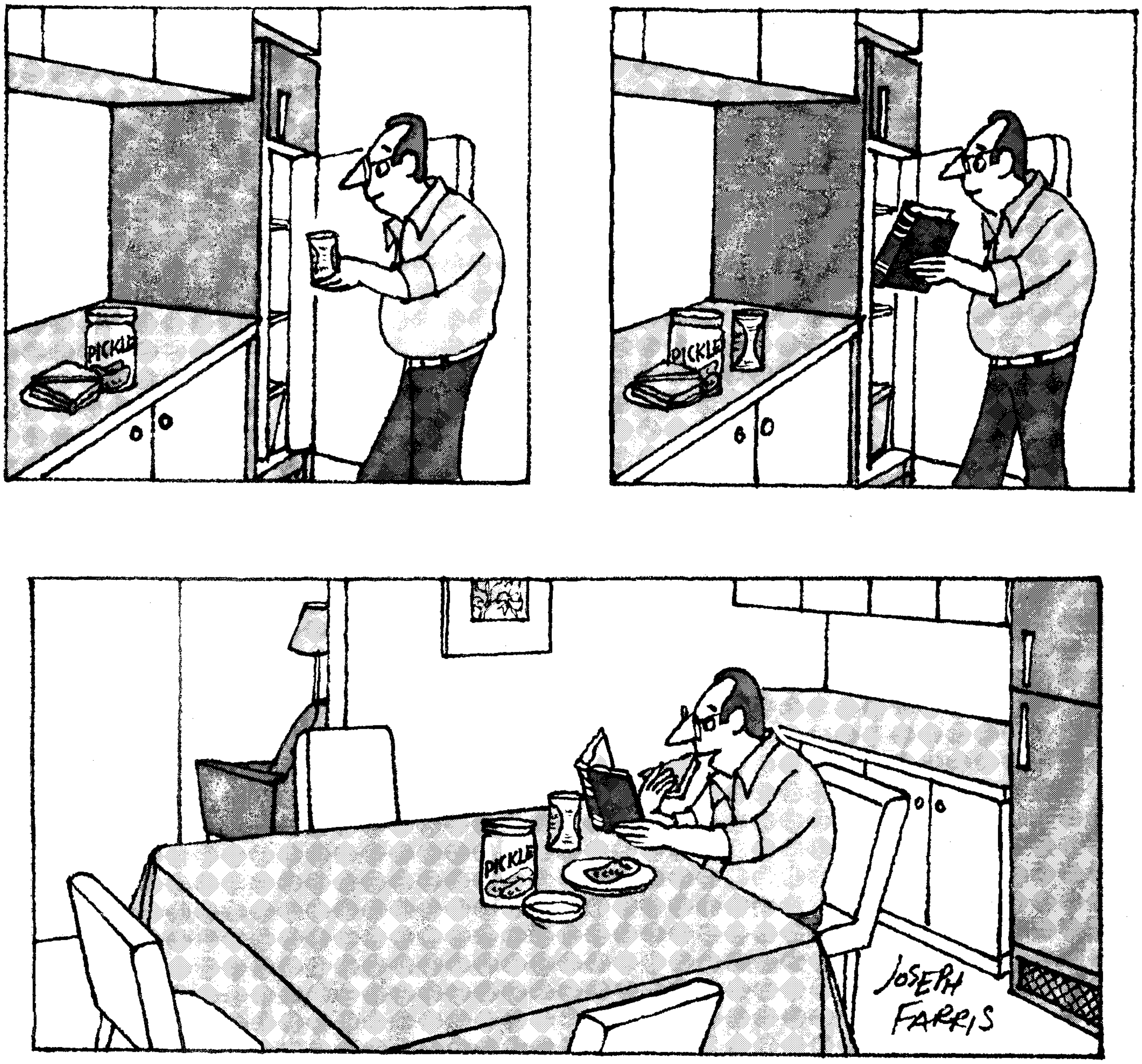
"I think it stinks!"

Dorothy pushed past me, opened the door, and went out. Her mother scowled at me with vindictive triumph.

AFTER the examinations, there was little reason to go back to school except for the company; I took afternoons off. Once, on the noon bus, I found Dot Gordon reading, and we spent that afternoon together in the Gordons' neglected garden. Then we spent several more afternoons there—leisurely, loafing, tea-drinking afternoons. Time passed very slowly.

"It's sometimes the back of eleven before she gets home, sometimes much later. I waited up on Tuesday night," Dot said. "She was drunk. I'm sure she's got another boyfriend. How'd you like it if your mother were seen plastered on the last bus? We had a terrible row, Alec. She tells me, 'I've scrimped and saved and done without, for what? For you to go to university? Don't make me laugh!' "

I had nothing to confess about ei-



ther of my parents that might help Dot feel less exceptional. I felt safe, coddled in averageness, affection, and security, none of which Dot had ever enjoyed. At best, I could have said that my father was a political half-wit who had recently devised a theory that the compulsory study of flower and vegetable cultivation in all schools worldwide would save the planet from the madness of its rulers. My complaint seemed too trivial to counter Dot's accounts about her mother. And besides, I'd begun to suspect that Dot enjoyed being exceptional.

"She isn't finished yet," Dot said. "In fact, she's hardly started. And I'll tell you this—I don't care what she does, because I won't be here to have to live with it."

Dot planned to share a flat with other students at the university. She was determined to leave home. "She's got another job, as a waitress, and she can't claim that she needs me. And I don't need her," she said calmly. "I mean, she won't help me, and no one else will. I'll just make my own way." It was the unruffled determination of her attitude that agitated me most.

"Leave home now and you could make your mother do something daft," I said anxiously. "You'd blame yourself."

Her patience with me, her suppressed laugh that recalled her mother's face as it prepared for a downright scowl, seemed to accuse me of lacking perspicacity. "I don't even like her," Dot said. "She's never made me feel that she wants me here. She told me herself she can't stand the sight of me." These were unforgiving words, and they disturbed me. "I wouldn't tell you this, Alec, unless she already knew what I think about her. I've told her what I have in mind. You don't know the half of it." I was ready to believe her. "We haven't said a civil word to each other in months. Neither of us can be bothered to even try."

It took several days before I brought myself to confide in my father.

"You'll be worried about Dorothy, but I wouldn't worry too much, son. After an upbringing like that, she'll stand on her own two feet all right. I'm as sure of that as I've been sure of anything else in this world. Anyway, Dot's hardly the first young woman to make a break for it."

"Did you already know it had come to this?"

"No, I didn't, but I could see it coming."

"How could you tell?"

He paused as he firmed a plant in a pot. "When water runs off that glass," he said, looking up at the roof of his greenhouse, "then I know it's *raining*."

"I know Dot better than almost anyone, and it didn't strike *me* as obvious."

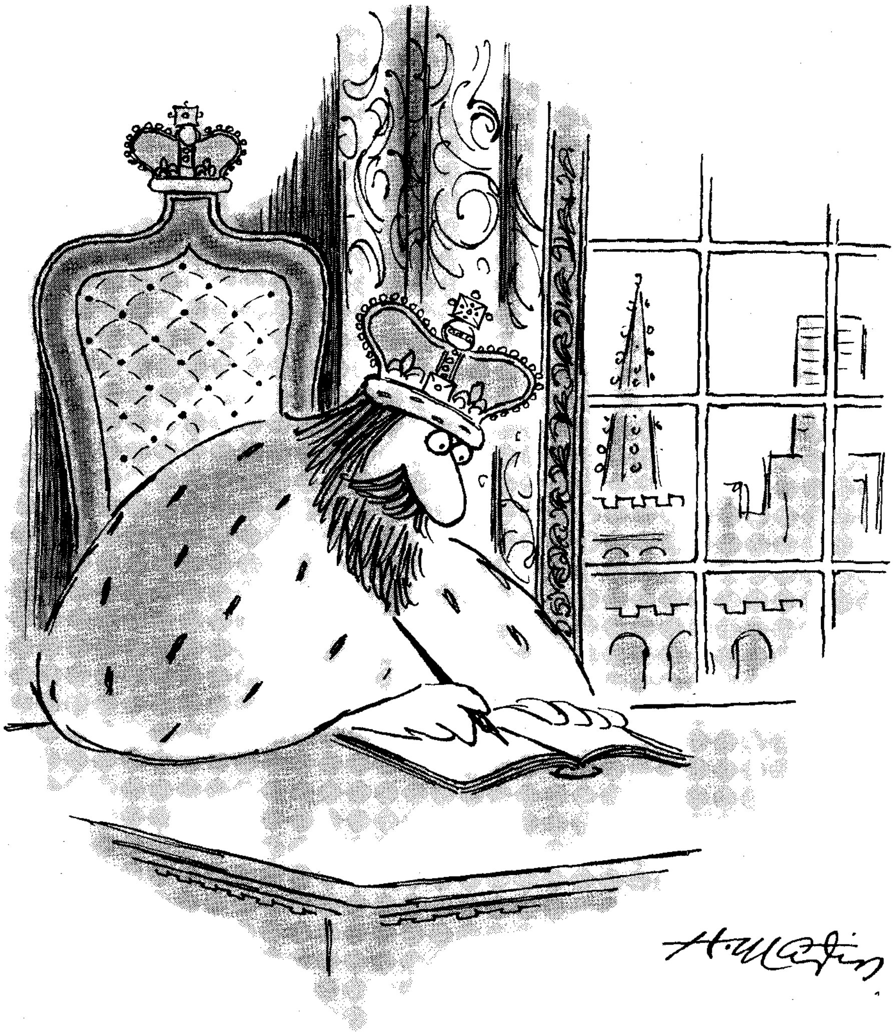
"No, nobody sees what's happening to somebody they're fond of," he said, with irritating judiciousness. "A twisted minx she'll grow up to be, unless we've a miracle, and miracles don't happen. It's you I'm worried about. I know where you've been every afternoon this week."

"Don't go round thinking it's like that."

"Maybe not, but you'd like it to be." I turned my face away. "Do something about it," he said. "And if you take my advice, it'll be a goodbye."

When I next saw Dot, I noticed a playful tolerance in her manner. Occasionally she showed signs of boredom as I talked about books or movies. Her intelligence was quick and brilliant; it was unlike her to say so little. She seemed to be waiting for me to take a step that she had predicted weeks or months before. Now, and probably then, too, I had a sense of inevitable ending—that I would touch her, kiss her, and that doing so would break all of childhood like a sheet of glass. I felt that Dot was enduring my reticence, putting up with me, her eyes daring me forward with their keen blue challenge that said she would not make the first move, that it was all up to me.

When I kissed her, Dot's complicity was unmistakable; her willingness felt as real as my own. But after a minute or two she pushed me away and got up from the grass. Her composure was remarkable; mine was less so, but at least it was composure: my father had not forewarned me in so many words, but he had hinted at how it would turn out.



"Dear Diary:
To be of greater service to my subjects, we have installed this day an 800 number in the palace."

Dot said, "I've too much on my mind to get involved, and you and I probably *would* get all mixed up about this."

She seemed surprised that I walked away without clumsy, amorous talk. She called after me as I swung the gate behind me. It squeaked worse than ever.

BEFORE Dot left Kemshill early in September, there were reports of arguments late at night between her and her mother. After she'd gone, the stories continued, supplied by evening dog-walkers and furtive drunks, the bearers of whispers. Irene Gordon was seen on the last bus, they said: sometimes accompanied by a man, often abusive, well dressed, made up, smart and tight. Over the next years her looks, rescued from the past, succumbed to time and age. As she withered into pathos, repentance, and loneliness, my mother and a few of her friends took to visiting her again.

Ralph Harvie was released after serving ten years of his sentence. When he came out of prison he had the good sense not to settle in Kemshill. Before moving farther away, he stayed for a few months in Overrigg. My father's humor survived a little longer. "Overrigg? But Ralph, you were innocent."

"George, I was guilty. I killed a man."

"But Overrigg? That's too much punishment."

Ralph waved away my father's jovial efforts. "I meant to kill him. I thought of very little else ever since the day I knew he existed."

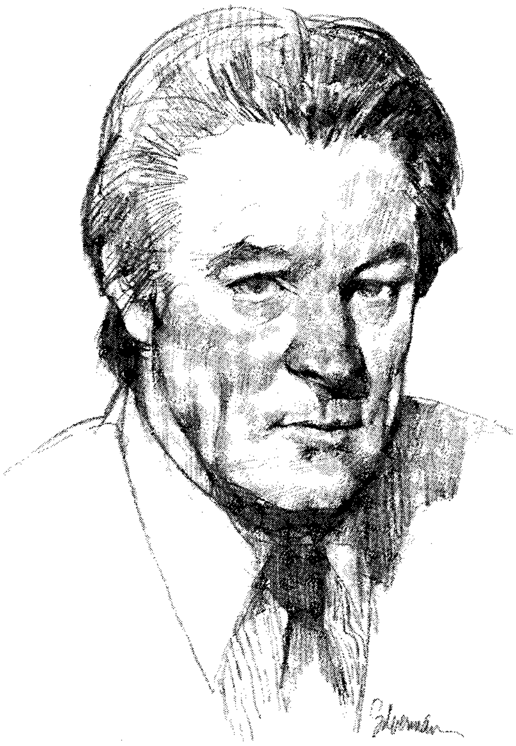
It was six years before I saw Dot again; she called my name across a street in Glasgow. It was as though she had just been on my mind; perhaps she always was. The pale fineness of her skin had gone. There were faint lines running from her inner cheeks into the corners of her mouth. She looked older and different, but still persisting within her was the outline of the indestructible friend of my childhood. Perhaps I was the only person alive who could see that. She kissed me on the cheek, and said I could buy her coffee. I bought her dinner. Then the rest of it started.

—Douglas Dunn

PROFILES

AN AIR OF MYSTERY

EVEN in a society accustomed to taking personal freedom for granted, Roland Dumas, the Foreign Minister of France, stands out for having done largely as he pleased with his life—for having made the pursuit of independence a kind of art form. Charm, limitless ability, and circumstance (in no particular order) have carried him to fortune and, more recently, to high office. And though Dumas, now sixty-three, is new to the executive arm of government, having been part of it for a little over two years, he has already distinguished himself. For any Foreign Minister to earn the unreserved admiration of his peers in most of the major capitals in so brief a time, as Dumas has done, is uncommon—indeed, remarkable—and the more so in his case, since he came to the Foreign Ministry with no obvious qualifications aside from being a close friend and confidant of President François Mitterrand, a man who has had few close friends or confidants. In London, for example, where French Foreign Ministers have often been regarded as hair shirts, Dumas has been pronounced "charming" by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, a stern judge of ministers—her own and other people's—and she is known to enjoy dealing with him. Britain's Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, likes to arrange confidential meetings with Dumas at Chevening, a country house near London that goes with the job, and sings his praises. "A born diplomat" is a characterization of Dumas that one hears in London, Bonn, and other major capitals.



Skeptics say that if Dumas is well liked it's because his immediate predecessor, Claude Cheysson, although he was a professional diplomat, was so undiplomatic that he was an easy act to follow. Cheysson did have an abrasive style, and a tendency to call spades shovels, which taxed the patience of other governments. Still, almost without exception the Foreign Ministers of France's Fifth Republic have, like Cheysson, been professional diplomats or senior civil servants—institutional figures. Dumas is wholly atypical—an establishment personality with no institutional ties. He has used the Foreign Ministry—which is known as the Quai, because it is on the Quai d'Orsay—instead of being used by it; he hasn't adopted its attitudes, he doesn't normally argue its positions within the Cabinet, and still less does he take part in its internal business. Dumas is Mitterrand's man, not the Quai's; he is in close touch with whatever Mitterrand may be involved with at any given moment, and he is very secretive. His colleagues at the Quai are often in the dark about where policy is heading, or why, because Dumas hasn't taken them into his confidence: everything bubbles up, but not much trickles down. It is said that he is the only Foreign Minister anyone can remember who has sometimes disappeared without informing his office how he could be reached. One of his recent vanishing acts lasted thirty-six hours, according to a prominent diplomat at the Quai. "His absences are legendary," a French diplomatic reporter says. Dumas's companion on a few sorties has been François Mitterrand. They have much in common, including a passion for art, and they occasionally go to galleries together; also, Mitterrand fancies old books, and occasionally they browse together in bookshops.

Not long ago, during a flight in his official airplane to his constituency in the Dordogne, I asked Dumas about these outings with Mitterrand.

"That fascinates our staffs," he said, without elaborating. Usually, however, when Dumas drops out of sight he is on official business, and Mitterrand may be the only person who knows exactly where he is. Dumas's people back at the Quai are at times in the awkward position of being unable either to confirm or to deny reports that their leader is in some African or Middle Eastern capital. Not surprisingly, many people in the Quai don't share the high opinion of Dumas held in other foreign ministries. They acknowledge his gifts but tend to resent his style and his indifference to the institution.

Dumas isn't nearly as well known in France as his current role and his past accomplishments might suggest. He is, in fact, a rather mysterious figure. Politics, he says, is his true vocation, but he is a lawyer by profession, and his considerable worldly success rests squarely on the law practice that he built up. Yet his approach to the law has been as atypical as his approach to the Quai d'Orsay. The style of the legal profession varies sharply from one country to another. In France, the law isn't thought to be one of the better or more reliable paths to fortune, and very few French lawyers specialize; they tend to be chosen by clients for their broad qualifications. "A good lawyer should be able to do anything," Dumas says. Nevertheless, his practice, by French standards, has been curiously specialized, and extraordinarily profitable. Dumas managed a convergence between his practice and the two worlds that interest him—politics and the arts. He has been professionally involved in France's most celebrated political-legal brawls over the past three decades; until recently, for example, he was the lawyer for *Le Canard Enchaîné*, the satirical weekly, which is enterprising, sometimes brilliant, occasionally unrigorous, and prone to litigation. As *Le Canard's* lawyer, Dumas took on the regimes of

Mitterrand's three immediate predecessors: General Charles de Gaulle, Georges Pompidou, and Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. This is a fact from which he gets satisfaction. More remarkable, this most prominent of France's "political" lawyers was the key figure in settling the huge and hugely complicated estate of Pablo Picasso, who left no will. And it was to Dumas, his lawyer, that Picasso entrusted what to him was the truly important matter of his later years: the decision on when to send the "Guernica," which had been on loan to the Museum of Modern Art, in New York, since 1939, to Spain.

Besides Picasso, Dumas has represented many other artists—Georges Braque, Marc Chagall, Alberto Giacometti, Juan Gris, and André Masson, to name a few. He has represented writers, including Jean Genet. He has represented the tenor Placido Domingo—an old friend as well as a client—on whom he conferred the Légion d'Honneur last May. When Luciano Pavarotti, Domingo's rival, had a dispute with the Paris Opéra, Dumas was the arbitrator. He has represented movie people, including Roger Vadim, Dawn Addams, and Bernadette Lafont. And he has represented at least one couturier—Jacques Esterel (in a famous dispute with Yves Saint Laurent). Another notable on the Dumas list is Roger Cazes, the *patron* of the Brasserie Lipp, whose politics are well to the right, and who is given to taxing Dumas with the misdeeds of socialism when Dumas lunches or dines chez Lipp. Dumas's association with celebrities of the first order attracted lesser celebrities to his practice, not to mention a more conventional but financially rewarding clientele. His participation in famous political cases enhanced his professional standing and influence. And his direct involvement with politics—he has been elected a deputy three times and knows his way around the Palais Bourbon, which houses France's parliamentary assembly—also helped him in his ascent to the very top of France's legal tree, to become the counsellor of powerful people, fashionable people, and people whose distinction lay mainly in their being able to pay exceptional fees to their lawyer.

"His office is a classic—very nineteenth-century, very *artisanal*. It rests entirely on him—on his presence, charm, and contacts. He is the soul of the firm. Thirty years ago, that was the style. His firm has few cases, compared with others. Also, whereas there are many lawyers who try several cases over, say, two weeks, he would plead only once or twice every two weeks." This comment on Dumas was made by Jean-Denis Bredin, who is a friend and a fellow-lawyer—probably France's most prominent lawyer at the moment, both because his practice is vastly successful (Dumas was perhaps his closest rival) and because he has written several books, both history and novels, a few of them best-sellers and all of them highly regarded. "The leisurely pace of his practice suits him, because it suits his life style," Bredin told me one day, speaking as if Dumas were still practicing. "In short, he isn't wholly involved in it, because he is involved in other things, such as politics. Mitterrand is a part of his life. Also, he likes to write. For French lawyers and other professionals, writing legitimatizes them. It is a French ailment—a little absurd."

A thirty-two-year-old woman named Christine Courrègé, who has worked with Dumas since 1978, is now in charge of the Dumas firm, which consists of only four lawyers; she is attractive and mildly gamine in style, and by all accounts is very gifted. She says the firm continues to specialize in matters regarding the art world and the press. Giacometti's widow, Annette, is a client, and the estates of other artists, including Giorgio de Chirico, Wifredo Lam, and Henri Laurens, constitute new business. Mme. Courrègé handles *Le Canard Enchaîné's* legal problems, and she recently won a case in which Jean-Marie Le Pen, the leader of France's extreme right, sued the paper for defamation. "The firm almost hasn't budged since Dumas left," she says, making it quite clear that everyone expects Dumas to return to the firm, whose offices are at 28 Rue de Bièvre, in a large house just off one of the quais in the Latin Quarter.

Dumas started his career with no possessions—at first, he says, he couldn't even afford to rent an apartment—but he has become a man of considerable property. He has a large and stylish house—a restored *maison à vin*—about eighteen miles from Bordeaux, where his wife, Anne-Marie, lives with their son Damien, who, at sixteen, is the youngest of three Dumas children. Dumas himself lives in Paris, and has for years. There he has an apartment on the Quai de Bourbon, on the Île Saint-Louis, which he has owned since 1956. He also owns the house on the Rue de Bièvre, which is just a few minutes' walk from his apartment and, conveniently, stands next door to a somewhat smaller house—a graceful, low-slung structure—that belongs to Mitterrand, who lived there before moving into the Élysée Palace. Dumas has a large art collection—"a remarkable collection," according to Maurice Rheims, a member of the French Academy and the doyen of the Paris art world.

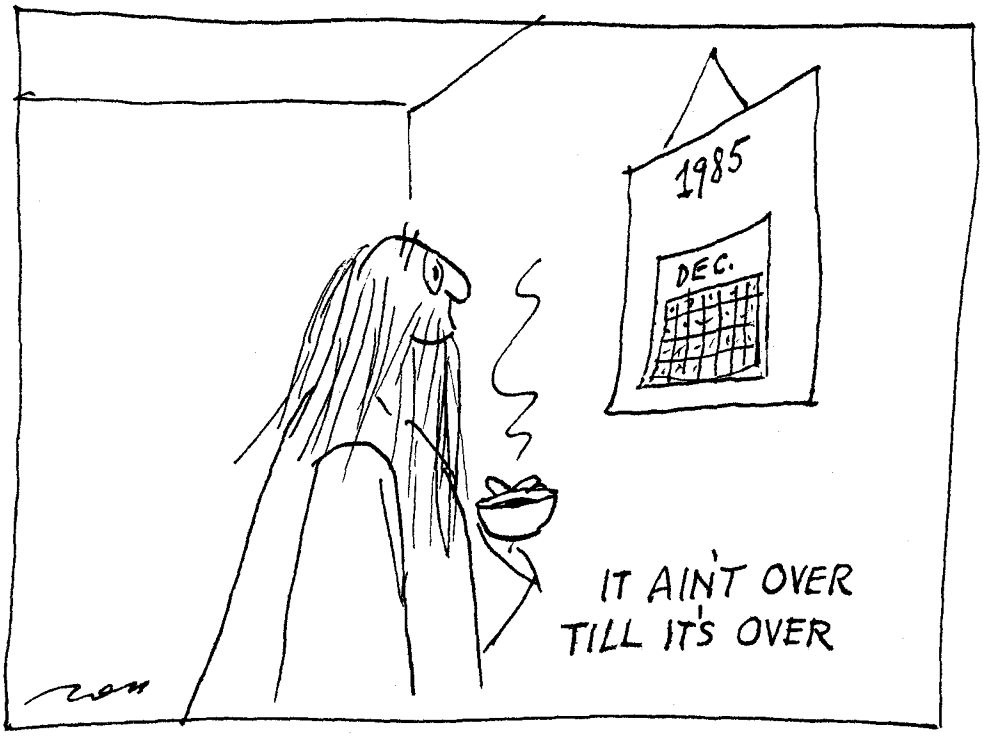
I recently asked Dumas if he hadn't gone against the grain professionally by specializing.

Dumas agreed that he had, and said, "A lawyer in France is sought for his fame and reputation, not for his expertise in this or that field. People want a lawyer of great reputation. I have concentrated on the law governing art and the press." He seemed to be saying that he had found a way to eat his cake and have it, too. He also acknowledged that his political activities, by expanding his reputation (where it counted), had enhanced his law practice—that the two careers did reinforce each other. This was no accident, he said. He had planned it that way.

I asked whether he had done so mainly to maximize his independence.

"Yes," he said. "In politics, I'm not a complete professional. I have freedom. Everything in life is precious."

Freedom, he said, is the most precious thing of all. But it isn't everything, as he has discovered. Among the oddities of the early days of Mitterrand's Presidency, which began in May of 1981, was the absence of Roland Dumas from his government. Dumas wasn't offered a job, and, given his long and close association with Mitterrand, French political circles


1985
DEC.
IT AIN'T OVER TILL IT'S OVER

were surprised, as Dumas himself must have been. And when he did enter the government, in November of 1983, it was in a sub-Cabinet-level job that was created for him: he was placed in charge of European affairs at the Quai d'Orsay—ostensibly under Claude Cheysson but with direct access to Mitterrand. "The price of being independent is not being there," says a political figure who is a friend of Dumas. "Dumas and Mitterrand did everything together for more than twenty years. Yet it's clear that Mitterrand didn't want him at first." Friends within the Dumas circle are not sure why Mitterrand initially excluded Dumas; he is not given to explaining himself. But many such people think that Mitterrand—the most determined and resilient French politician of his generation—was reproaching, perhaps punishing, Dumas for his less than full-blooded approach to politics. Dumas can say he is "not a complete professional" in politics. Others bluntly call him a dilettante; most of the people I spoke with about Dumas—friends and adversaries alike—used that term or some near-equivalent in reference to his political career and his attitude toward politics. "*Un dilettante avec un très grand brio*" is how one political rival describes him.

In each of his three successful campaigns for the National Assembly, Dumas ran in a different constituency. "He has never had an electoral fief," one of his friends says. "He has always been a marginal figure politically. At bottom, he is too intelligent. It all bores him—all that constituency work. To him, the business of politics is like slavery." Dumas is thought to have wanted and expected to become a member of Mitterrand's government. "He was very bitter about being kept outside," another friend says. "He said at the time, 'All the others were taken care of, but not me.' " Most of his friends think he expected to be made Minister of Justice. Instead, the job went to Robert Badinter, another lawyer and a man whom he is known to dislike strongly. "Politics is his real passion, not the bar," Bredin says.

THE best-informed comments on Dumas are similar. His charm, his ability, and his addiction to having a free hand run through them, as do his addictions to painting and music and, above all, secrecy. "He is secretive about things he doesn't have to be secretive about," says someone who has known him longer and better than most. "He doesn't even tell his secretary about some banal meeting." One evening a few months ago, Dumas and some colleagues from the Quai returned to Paris after a meeting in Brussels at which Common Market countries had been wrestling with problems of Spanish and Portuguese admission. At the Villa Coublay, a military airfield south of the city used by ministers, Dumas got into his car, bade everyone good night, left, and then returned to the field and took a plane to an airport in Bordeaux, where he had arranged to meet the Spanish Foreign Minister, Fernando Morán. A waiting car took them to Dumas's house. They arrived, I'm told, around nine in the evening and spent the next five hours working out arrangements for the entry of Spanish products—sardines, olive oil—into the European Community. "It really wasn't necessary to do it that way," someone at the Quai says. In August, a senior civil servant, referring to the scandal created by the French agents who blew up the Greenpeace ship Rainbow Warrior in New Zealand on July 10th, said jokingly to *Le Monde*, "If our secret agents were as discreet as Roland Dumas, this wouldn't have happened."

"Dumas speaks little about himself, and then only with great difficulty," a member of the Dumas circle says. "One feels indiscreet talking to him about himself. He is solitary, just as Mitterrand is. They share that quality, yet it is one of the things that separate them." This man says that he and other close friends of Dumas's are not friends of one another. He thinks that Dumas has ordered his friendships in this way. "*Le fond de lui—c'est le mystère*," he says.

"He is very intelligent, very amusing, and always good company," another friend says—one with experience in foreign affairs. "We used to dine together often before he became a minister. I've known him a long time, but don't ask me what he thinks about anything—relations with the United States, the Soviet Union, or anything else, really—because I simply don't know. No one knows. There is an air of mystery about him."

Habitual tardiness, it seems, is another Dumas trait. Even Mitterrand, who naturally expects his ministers to be available on short notice, has found himself unable to summon Dumas on occasion and, I was told, has at least once admonished him not to miss a Cabinet meeting. Actually, being late is another of the tendencies that Mitterrand and Dumas share, and one for which Mitterrand is more notorious.

"Dumas is the smart, rich socialist lawyer," says a British diplomat who has known him a long time. Smart and

"Excuse me, Ma'am, could you please tell me if Spurt is a toothpaste, a detergent, or a breakfast cereal?"

• •

rich he is, but an authentic socialist he really is not. People who know Dumas feel that his politics—and, indeed, his life—have been decisively influenced by two events: first, the execution of his father, Georges Dumas, who was a figure in the French Resistance, by a German firing squad, in March of 1944; and, second, the support and help he gave François Mitterrand at a moment when Mitterrand's career seemed to be collapsing around a crisis of his own making. The death of the father, whom the son revered, marked Dumas forever as a man of the political center left. He could never have joined the center right, or even the supposed center—a place on the French political spectrum often claimed by a party called the Radical Socialists—because it had been tainted by what was, at the least, a passive collaboration with the Nazi occupation.

"Yes, the French bourgeoisie was compromised," Dumas said when I asked him about this. He added that he had a few friends on the right who had fought against the Germans. "But the base of the right was compromised," he repeated.

However, Dumas has never committed himself to the ritual non-Communist left—the socialists—because he lacks strong political views, including socialist views. He became a member of the Socialist Party in 1971, only because Mitterrand became its leader then. Dumas's instincts seem to edge him to the left of center, but just barely. "For him, the only thing on the left was the steering wheel of his Porsche," a diplomat in Paris once said.

Most of Dumas's sketchy political career was made possible by Mitterrand, including, of course, his long-delayed taste of government and the political high life. "At first, Mitterrand wasn't very important," Dumas says. "It was my experience in the region"—the Limousin, where the Dumas family was rooted—"that was important. In 1956, after my first election, I began to know him well. His party"—the Union Démocratique et Socialiste de la Résistance—"was the closest to my natural political family and that of my father." The U.D.S.R. was often a pivotal force in the parliamentary politics of the Fourth Republic, which gave way to the Fifth after de Gaulle returned to power in May of 1958. Although the U.D.S.R. was a small party, seldom having more than fifteen deputies in the Assembly, it controlled vital strategic ground just to the left of center; in the tumultuous nineteen-fifties, it was often impossible to put together a government that didn't include the U.D.S.R., because part of what consensus there was lay on its bit of terrain. Mitterrand was a minister eleven times in that era. He was the youngest, most dynamic, most resourceful, and most ambitious of the Party's leaders. Most of the others rallied to de Gaulle after his return, but not Mitterrand. He became one of the few personalities left over from the Fourth Republic whom the Gaullists worried about. And they disliked him.

Algeria was the issue that sank the Fourth Republic and brought back de Gaulle. By then, Mitterrand, who had once supported the policy of keeping Algeria French, favored letting it and the Métropole go their separate ways. The passion and the increasing violence unleashed in the name of French Algeria made this position an uneasy one. Its best-known advocate was former Prime Minister Pierre Mendès France, the natural leader of the non-Communist left. By then,

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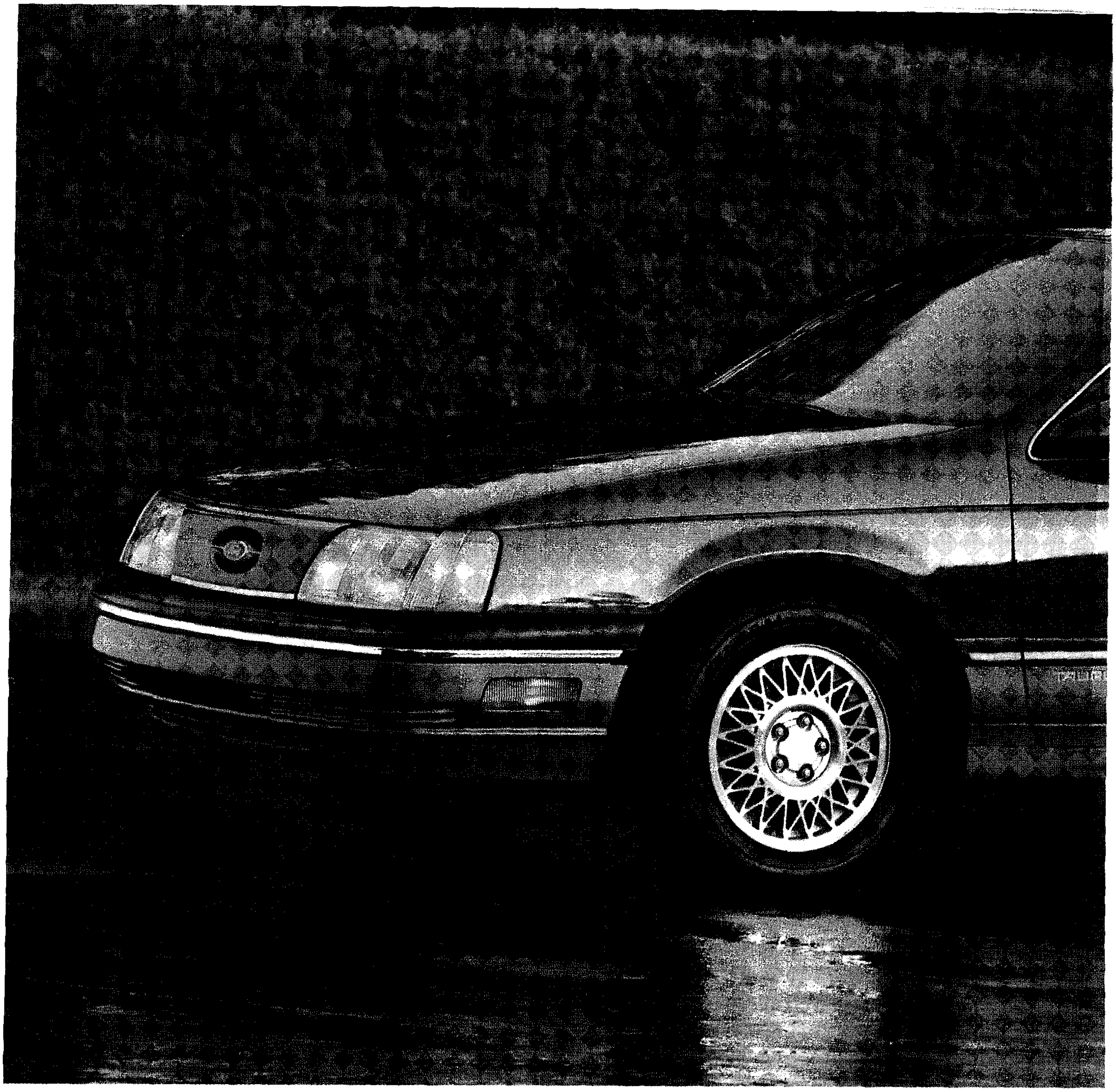

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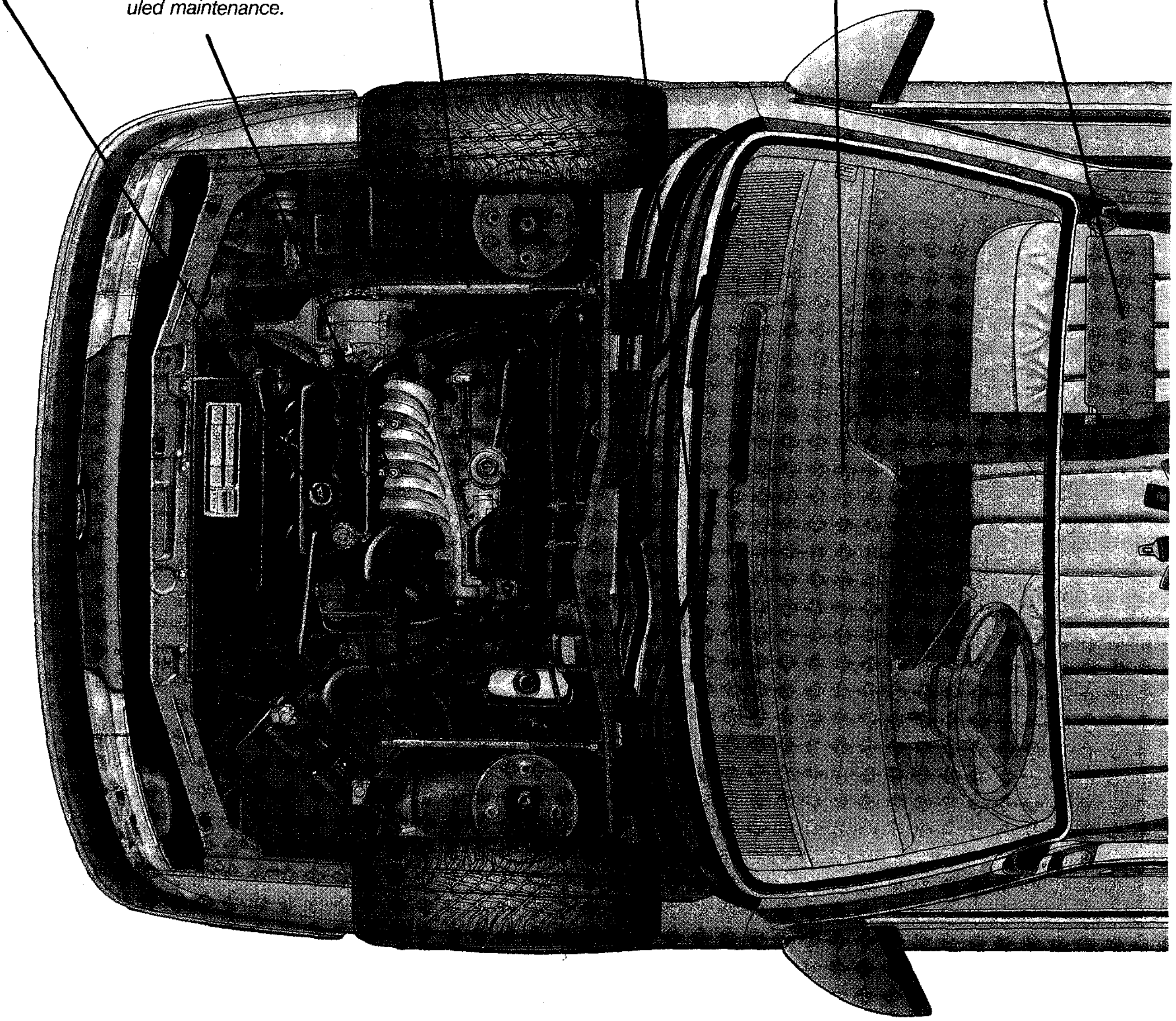

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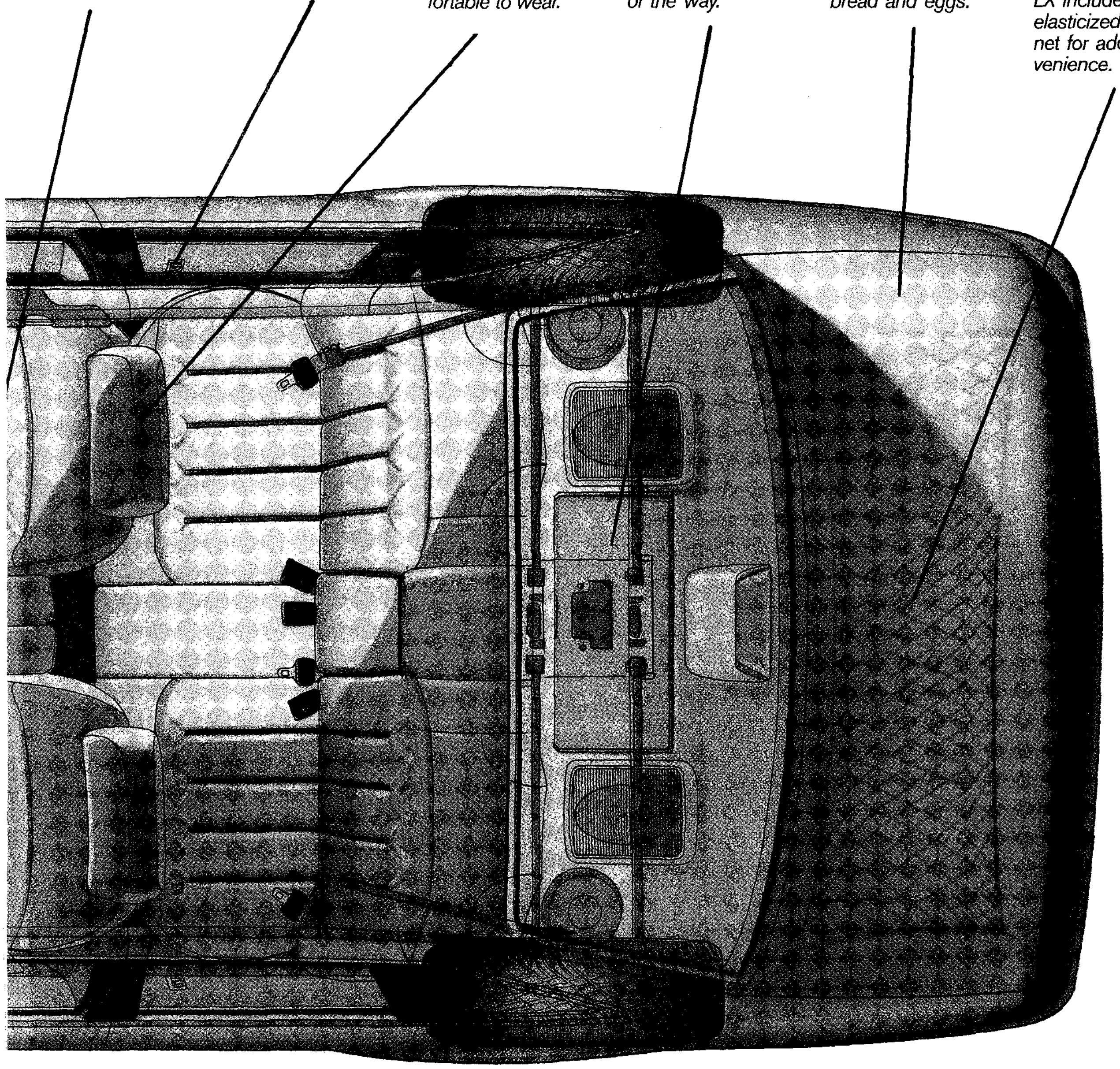

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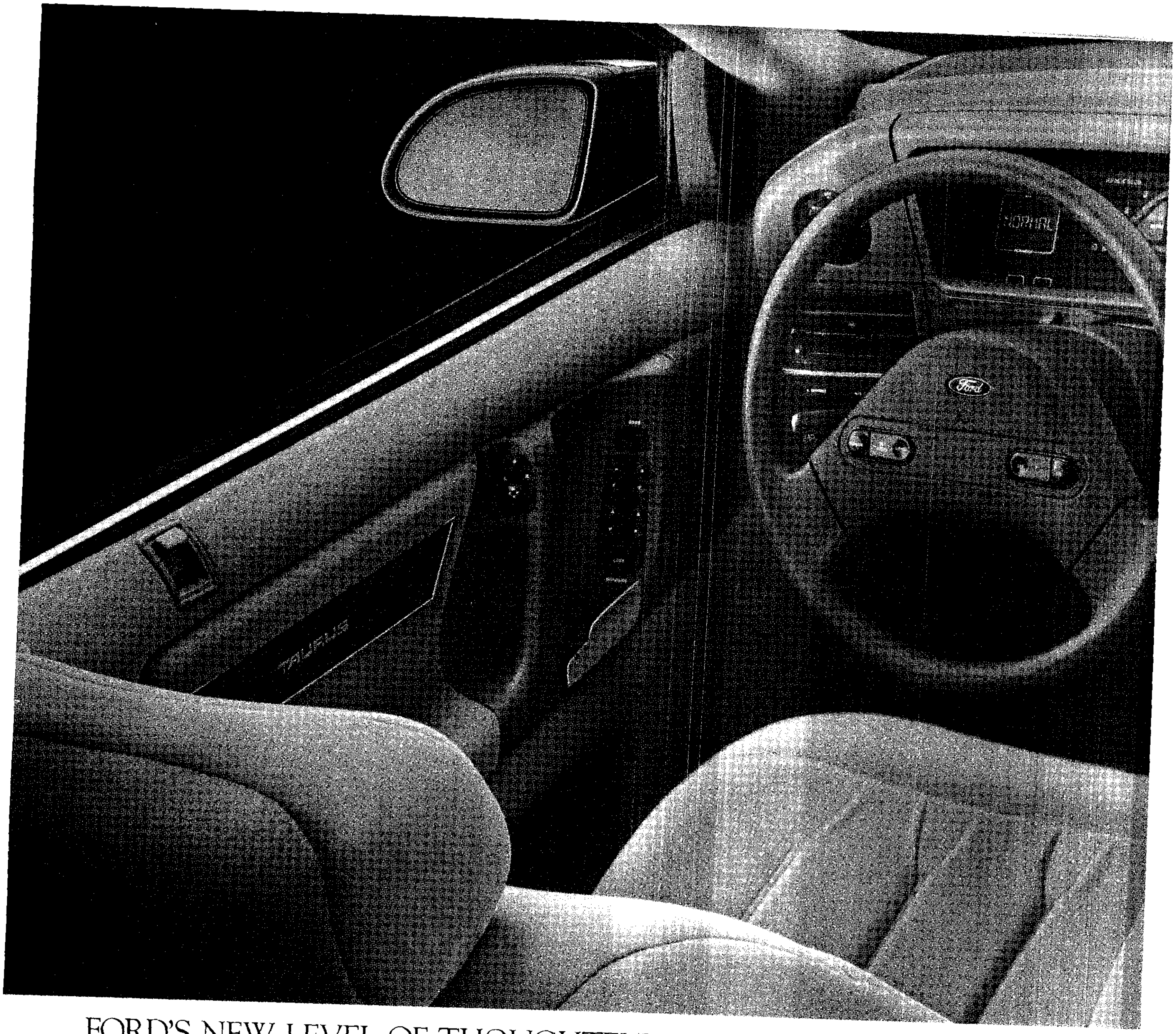

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Have you driven a Ford... lately?

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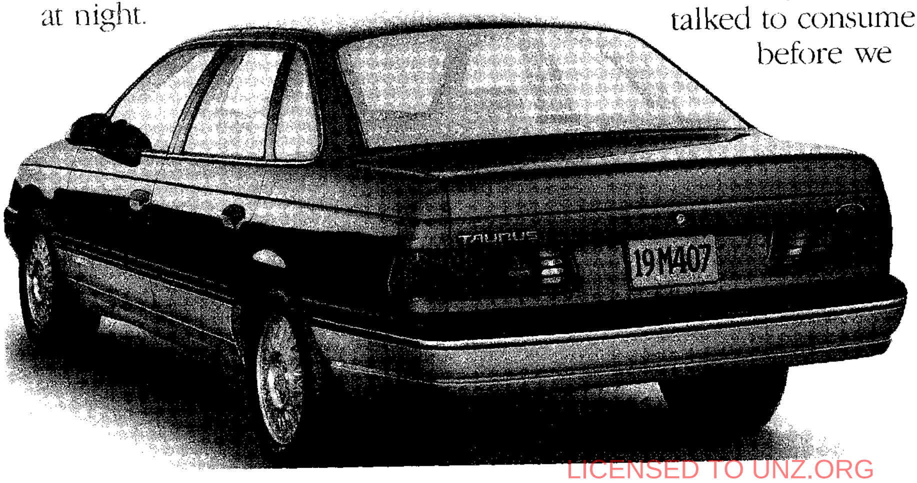

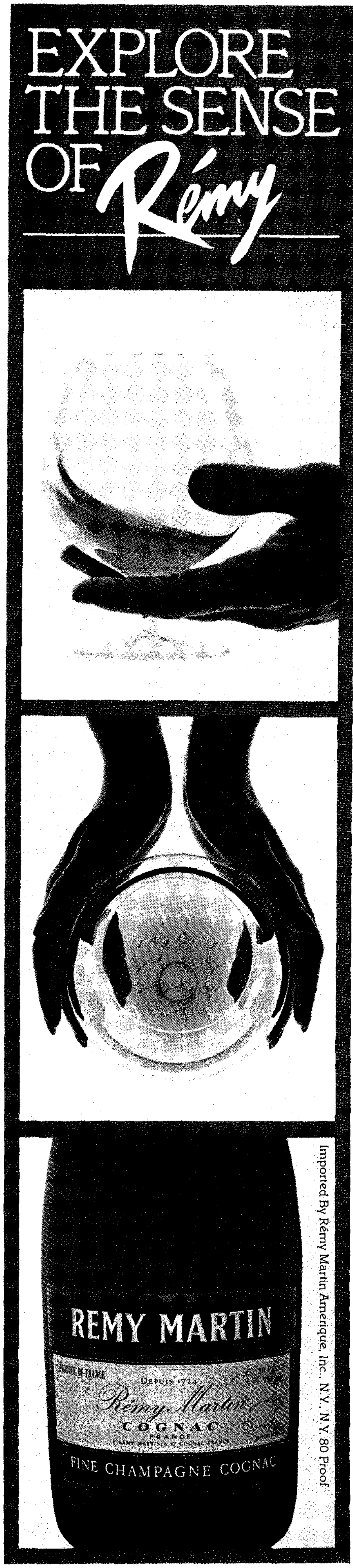
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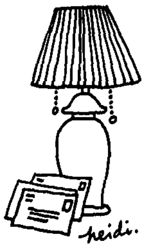
Mitterrand had become a rival of Mendès France, a man whom he had once looked up to (he is believed never to have looked up to anyone else), but Mendès France remained a far more respected and popular, if less astute, political figure. Then, abruptly, on the morning of Friday, October 16, 1959, Mitterrand found himself in sole possession of center stage. During the night, gunmen, it seemed, had tried to kill him. Around midnight, he said, he had noticed them following his car; this had caused him to abandon it at the Square de l'Observatoire, near the Luxembourg Gardens. He vaulted the iron fencing and hid in the park. The gunmen fired several shots into the car and fled. Over the next several days, there was talk of little else in Paris, and Mitterrand acquired a heroic aspect. Then a weekly of the extreme right, *Rivarol*, accused Mitterrand of having faked the incident—in effect, of having made himself appear to be the literal target of the French Algeria forces. The source of the accusation was Robert Pesquet, a marginal figure of the political right, who had evidence to support his story. From overnight hero, Mitterrand became an overnight figure of fun. And since he had initially misled an official inquiry into the supposed attempt on his life, his trouble was legal as well as political. In response to Gaullist pressure, the Senate, of which Mitterrand was then a member, voted overwhelmingly to strip him of his parliamentary immunity from prosecution. He had found the nadir not only of his career but also of his life. Allies and associates melted away. "Many of his friends on the center left kept their hands in their pockets" in the vote on his immunity, Bredin says. "He is very conscious of who remained loyal." One of those who did was Dumas, who was first a friend and then one of three lawyers retained by Mitterrand. The facts were that one day early in October Pesquet encountered Mitterrand (who by sheer chance was walking with his friend Dumas). Pesquet asked Mitterrand to have a coffee with him, and during their meeting Pesquet said that people from Algiers had ordered him to kill Mitterrand. He didn't want to do it, he said, but he would be in danger of being killed himself if he declined or if Mitterrand denounced him to the police. Mitterrand was, of course, being set up, and must have suspected as much. But he later said in his defense that he had taken pity on a man confronted by an awful dilemma—in effect, that he had been taken in, by agreeing to a scam. Mitterrand survived; the judicial proceeding was eventually dropped, mainly because of the obvious entrapment, and the political damage was not irreparable after all. Yet people around him continue to wonder why Mitterrand, a wily and experienced politician, a former Minister of Justice and Interior Minister, hadn't confided in some police or judicial official, or even in some reputable friend—in any case, someone who would have been able to support his story. "Mitterrand keeps his distance from everyone," says a newspaper editor who has known him a long time. "That's why he got into trouble. If he had told someone about the trap being set for him, he'd have been in much better shape." A politician who knows him well says, "Mitterrand knew he was heading into a trap, but he didn't know the trap had been so well prepared. Dumas helped him a lot then."

Mitterrand, who has been compared to Richard Nixon, is a subtle, complex figure whose motives are often obscure. Mitterrand, unlike Dumas, sprang from the traditional, clerical right of French political life. And as he moved across the spectrum—absorbing as much punishment as gain—an aura of mystery formed around him; he is even harder to understand than Dumas, according to people who know them. Their relationship is a source of speculation. "Mitterrand, unlike Dumas, doesn't have intimate friends," says an editor who has known him well over the years. "Everyone exaggerates his relationship with him, because it exists only superficially." Mitterrand obviously trusts Dumas as he does few others. Dumas has been performing political chores of the most sensitive kind for him for almost as long as they have known each other. In the mid-nineteen-sixties, when Mitterrand was trying to unify the political left, Dumas discreetly handled the negotiations with the Communist leadership. He also served over the years as Mitterrand's confidential emissary to political leaders in Africa and the Middle East. And, of course, he was at his side during *l'affaire de l'Observatoire*. Still, some say that the relationship between the two is less close than Dumas would have one believe. I



asked people who know them both whether Dumas and Mitterrand used the personal *tu* form when talking to each other. Everyone said they did not. I also asked Dumas; he said that in official meetings he and Mitterrand used the impersonal form but that when they were alone they did use the *tu*. Yet in another conversation, in which I asked why, in his opinion, he hadn't been asked to join the government at the outset, he cited Mitterrand as saying, "*Je vous réserve pour plus tard.*"

Without actually saying as much, Dumas noted another quality that he and Mitterrand share. "At bottom, François Mitterrand is a free man," he said. "He does what he wants. A few days ago, I was on a plane with him"—they were en route to a meeting with West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl—"and he took out a book by Renan and spent the time reading. He takes the time to read. What matters most is freedom of the spirit."

I MET Dumas for the first time early on a Sunday morning in Périgueux, the capital city of the Dordogne and the center of his constituency. He is a man of medium build, with a good-natured, vaguely roguish look about him. His face also conveys a sense of detachment. It is distinguished by a long, thin nose and a rather prominent chin, and is topped by a full head of wavy hair combed back and with nearly as much brown as gray. He has the look of a canny and successful provincial, not the *grand bourgeois* that he has become. He had flown down from Paris to attend something called a *félibrée*, a kind of folkloric fair, held every year, that evokes the history of the region. This year, it was being held in Mussidan, a small town not far from Périgueux. All the political chiefs of the region would be there. As we arrived in Mussidan, Dumas was greeted by the mayor and other dignitaries. Yves Guéna, who has been the mayor of Périgueux for fifteen years and is Dumas's adversary on the center right, was already there. So was Michel Suchod, a rival of another kind. A career diplomat who is detached from the Quai, Suchod has managed somehow to spend seventeen of his thirty-nine years in politics, seven of them in the Dordogne. He is a Socialist, but, unlike Dumas, he belongs to the left wing of the Party. Under France's new proportional-representation system of electing deputies, it is unlikely that both Dumas and Suchod can be elected in the Dordogne in March; the Party leadership can probably assure Dumas's reëlection, but not Suchod's. Suchod is a witty, clever Parisian, and is known to disapprove of Dumas and to resent him. (Suchod admitted to "a little tension in the relationship.") Guéna, whom Dumas defeated in 1981, makes no secret of his hostility, and, as far as I could tell, disdained to shake his hand on two occasions when he might have done so. Guéna told me that if it weren't for this very recent alteration of the electoral system—a change imposed by the Socialists and designed to help them—he would beat Dumas in the elections next March. Few politicians would disagree. Nonetheless, Dumas, the semi-professional, seemed far more comfortable with the conventions of the *félibrée* than either of his adversaries. The charm about which I'd heard such a lot was on full display. The men of Mussidan were dressed in traditional garb—black blouses and pants, colored scarves, and black hats. The women wore long, simple gowns and bonnets. The streets were bedecked with flowers, and a traditional instrument, the vielle, which sounds rather like an accordion, was heard everywhere. The ceremonial parts of the event, including an outdoor Mass, were conducted in langue d'oc, the regional dialect, which Dumas understands. Guéna seemed to grow more uncomfortable and fidgety as the day wore on. Suchod, a man with thinning hair and horn-rimmed glasses, had, unlike his fellow-politicians, dressed in the traditional clothes; he looked out of place in them but managed to conceal any discomfort he felt.

After close to four hours of ably doing his duty, Dumas bade farewell to the *notables*, and we departed for his house, about two hours away. We arrived in time for a late lunch with the entire Dumas family, plus the fiancé of Delphine, the only daughter, who is twenty-three. David, the next in line, is twenty-one; he intends to be a sculptor and is studying at the École des Beaux Arts, in Paris. Sixteen-year-old Damien attends a nearby lycée. Dumas was married once before—in 1954, to a Greek named Galousa Voultepsis. The marriage was childless and lasted about seven years. He and Anne-Marie Dumas were married in 1961; a plain-speaking, blond, and

"Hi, I'm Freddie Wenzle. I'm typical of the kind of people you're likely to meet at this gathering."

• •

immediately likable woman, who shares her husband's interest in painting, she is a Bordelaise, having been born a few miles from their house, and a member of the Lillet family, which produces the highly successful apéritif of that name.

The Limousin, where Dumas grew up, is some hundred and fifty miles farther north, and links central France to the Southwest. Limoges is the only real city in the Limousin, which consists mainly of farms, villages, and a few small towns; the region reminds one of what people mean when they speak of *la France profonde.* Dumas has friends from childhood whom he still sees; in fact, one of them, Pierre Duffau, is working for him at the Quai—mainly on political matters in the Dumas constituency. Duffau and other friends describe the family in which Dumas grew up as exceptionally close. His father was by every account a wholly admirable figure, and, according to Duffau, whose own father was Georges Dumas's oldest and closest friend, was "*très séduisant;*" Roland, he says, acquired his charm from his father. Dumas has a sister, Georgette, who is a painter, married and living in Paris. The youngest member of the family, a brother named Jean, died in 1983—killed in an auto accident, according to a version of his death put about by the family and the Dumas entourage. Actually, Jean Dumas, for reasons obscure, shot himself on the anniversary of his father's execution by the Germans. Although Dumas is reluctant to talk about himself with anyone, or even about French policy with Paris-based diplomats (he will talk a fair amount without actually saying much that is responsive or directly relevant), he does talk freely about his father. "He was the model for me in life," Dumas told me during the drive to his house. "I wanted to be like him in all senses. My best memories are those of my childhood. We had a close and normal family life. My father was there all the time. There was no drama in the family. Everything else has been derisory by comparison." (This comment could be interpreted as a reference to the effect of his autonomous life in Paris.)

I asked about his father's politics.

"My father was very proud of his role as a captain in the military reserves," Dumas said. "He was also a man of the left, a syndicalist. But he was a real liberal. He had tolerance. He wouldn't accept any anti-clericalism in spite of his syndicalism. And he never actually engaged in politics, which is corrosive. One loses one's purity." All this was singularly plain talk from a man whose style tends to be extrinsic and unserious.

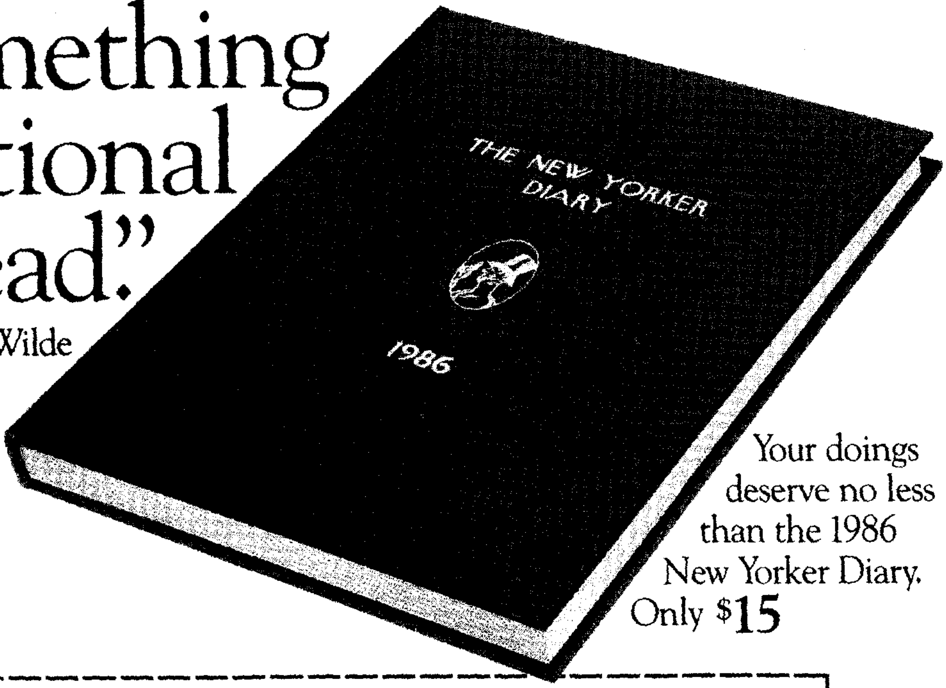
I asked him about the Second World War.

"The only time I ever saw my father cry was when we heard the news that war had broken out," Dumas replied. "He had fought in the war of 1914-18, and he felt that two wars in the same generation were too much." Dumas went on to say that his first separation from the family occurred shortly thereafter. His father sent him to study in a Catholic college in Lyons. There his independent streak took over, and he began edging away from the academic mainstream—history and classics—to concentrate instead on economics and modern languages. Along with a boyhood friend named Jean-Pierre François, who shared a room with him in Lyons, he also joined the Resistance. "We joined it late in 1941, and were together for nearly two years," François recalls. "It wasn't very organized. It was very amateur, dilettantish work. Most of our activity was distributing tracts. In late 1942, after Lyons was occupied, we began moving Jews and other threatened people to Switzerland. Later, it all got more organized, and Dumas moved his activities into central France. His father was a very generous, hospitable man, and their home was always open to refugees. They hid Jews during the war. His mother was a simpler, more provincial soul."

Dumas *fils* was arrested in March of 1942. "Essentially, it was a prank," he said of what he did. The Berlin Philharmonic was coming to Lyons, attended by a lot of German hoopla, and he and some other students tried to

"I never travel without my diary. One should always have something sensational to read."

Oscar Wilde



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organize a boycott of the performance, even trying to prevent people from entering the hall. The affair went badly, and Dumas was imprisoned by the Vichy police. He escaped after three weeks, returned to the Limousin, and developed links with local Maquis groups. “After the cocoon of the family, life wasn’t the same,” he told me. “It was when for the first time my life began to be shaken up.” Dumas soon moved on to Paris to begin studying law, but he maintained his Resistance ties and lived in what was called *la clandestinité*. In Paris, he made contact with old friends from Limoges named Dubois. Eugène Dubois and Georges Dumas were close friends, and had worked together in the administration of Limousin finances. Roland Dumas and Marguerite Dubois, a daughter, were also good friends. She is now seventy—seven years older than he—and lives on the Boulevard Montparnasse, where I saw her recently.

“Even though he came to the house every day, we hadn’t the least idea where he lived or what he was doing, except that he was in *la clandestinité* and was also a law student,” she recalled. (The Dubois family lived on the Rue de l’Observatoire, close to the scene of Mitterrand’s great folly.) Mlle. Dubois, who became an accomplished soprano, was then having lessons with Yvonne Dumont, a notable French soprano of the era. Occasionally, Dumas and Marguerite sang duets together at the Dubois home, and because she thought his tenor voice quite exceptional she put him in touch with her teacher, and Dumas then worked regularly with Mme. Dumont while still attending law school—for four or five years, he says. Marguerite Dubois told me that for several years—she couldn’t remember how many—she and Dumas sang together in student operas. They did the entire Puccini repertoire, she said, and were able to stage a great many operas, because Mme. Dumont’s pupils covered the spectrum of voices, male and female.

I asked just how good a singer Dumas was.

“He had a rare talent and could have been a great opera star,” she said. “He had a very special lightness in his voice—very rare.”

When he conferred the Légion d’Honneur on Placido Domingo last spring, Dumas recalled in his remarks that as a young man he had for a time wavered between the bar and a singing career. During one of my conversations with him, I asked whether he had any regrets—whether a successful career as a singer might have imparted even more freedom to his life than the law had done.

“Yes, I hesitated, sometime in 1948 or ’49,” he said. “The great singers do have great independence, but there are difficulties. They have many obligations and must travel a lot.” He didn’t seem to have any regrets, but his passion for music remains, and in June he did a radio broadcast in which he spoke of links between diplomacy and music.

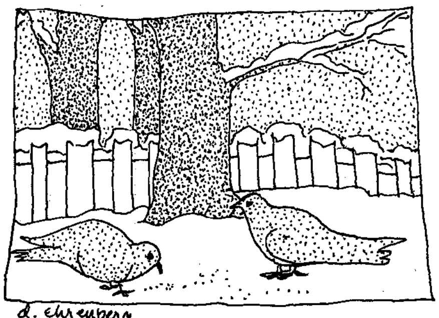
I asked Marguerite Dubois what she remembered most about Dumas.

“His charm,” she said. “His absolute, unfailing charm, which is so rare in a boy.” She went on to say that her father, who was also arrested by the Gestapo but was released, was informed by friends in Limoges of Georges Dumas’s death at German hands, and it fell to her to tell Dumas.

“It was very clear that it was the turning point of his life,” she said.

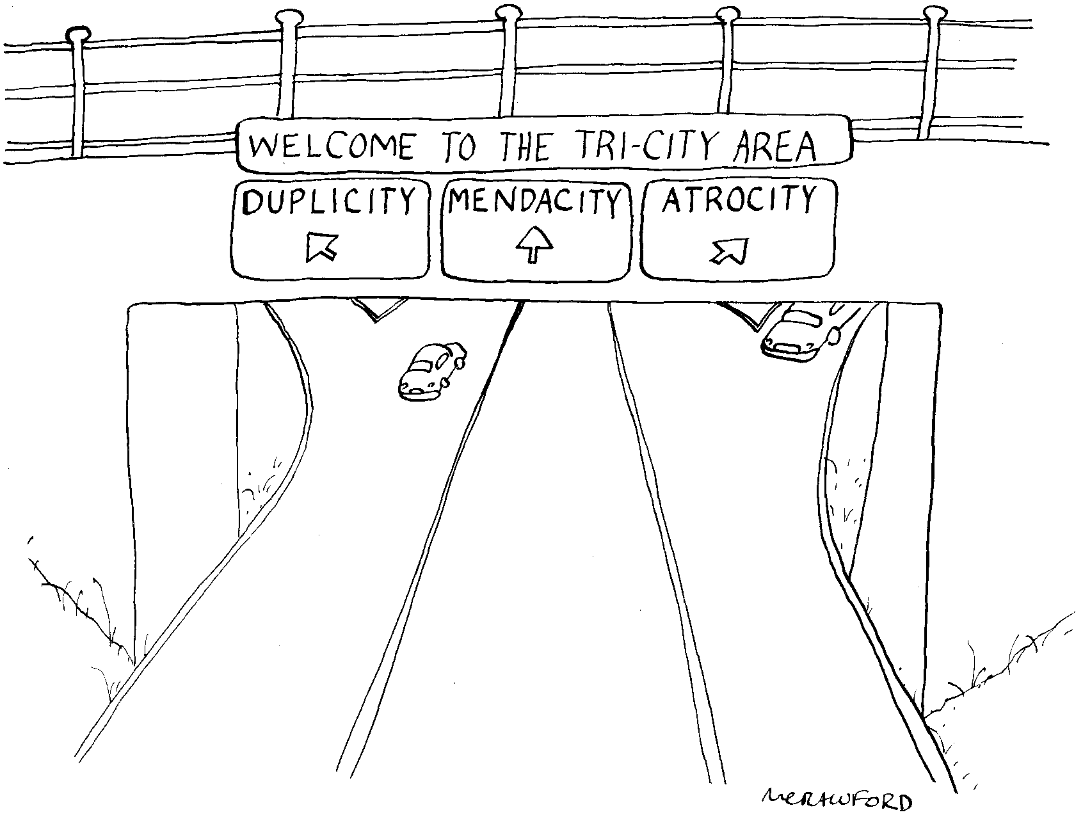
Dumas told me much the same thing. “That was the break with it all,” he said. On March 24th of each year, in the Périgourdin town of Brantôme, where Georges Dumas and two dozen others were shot, there is a memorial ceremony, which Dumas attends. And in Limoges a wide street leading away from the city hall is named the Avenue Georges Dumas.

Dumas absorbed an immense amount of experience in the years just before and after the war, managing to acquire a degree in law, a degree from l’Institut d’Études Politiques, and, thanks to a grant from the British made available to the children of martyred Resistance figures, still another degree, from the London School of Economics. During much of this time, he continued his singing, attended the School of Oriental Languages, and, to make ends meet, did some part-time journalism—another profession that nearly claimed him. Although he became a member of the bar in 1950, he had no clients to speak of, and worked mainly as a reporter for a financial-news group—a job in which he swiftly distinguished himself. He interviewed Muhammad Mossadegh, the eccentric Prime Minister of Iran who was shoved aside in the coup that put the Shah on the throne, and he is said to have been accorded the first interview with General Muhammad Naguib, the figurehead of the military group that dethroned Egypt’s King Farouk. Before long, he had to choose between journalism and the bar. “I liked journalism, but I knew I couldn’t make it my profession,” he said. “As a journalist, I wasn’t my own master. I wanted to be free—free to do politics. I didn’t have any money.” He found an aging lawyer to practice with. “I would go to work as a journalist, arriving in the early morning, work as a lawyer in the afternoon, and spend the evenings working on legal files.”



Dumas’s first real case, in 1953, involved a major Limousin Resistance figure named Georges Guingouin, who in 1940, at the age of twenty-seven, had become the leader of a large force of Maquis that dominated the Limousin politically and fought pitched battles against German units. Limoges became known as the Maquis capital. By the end of the war, Guingouin was leading more than twenty thousand men, and in 1945 he was elected mayor of Limoges. In 1953, this Tito Limousin, as he had been called, was accused of having summarily executed people who had been unfairly charged with collaborating with the Germans, and he was brought to trial. Some other former Resistance figures in the area suggested that he retain Georges Dumas’s son as his attorney, and Guingouin agreed. Dumas obtained an acquittal for him, arguing that a campaign in France against the “Red terror” had broadened into a trial of the Maquis of the Resistance. Guingouin, like many Resistance people, had been a Communist and, like many of them, had fallen away from the Party; in 1953, he was a simple *instituteur*, without political ties.

A year later, Dumas, still a struggling novice, took part in a bigger case—one of the biggest cases to have come along since the war. It involved the passing of sensitive military information to the French Communist Party, and so was called *l’affaire des fuites*—leaks. It involved three civil servants, the most senior of whom,



Jean Mons, was another Limousin personality and had been a close friend of Georges Dumas. Mons's title in the summer of 1954 was Permanent Secretary-General of the Ministry of Defense. During the war, he had been an important official in the Resistance—a member of the Committee for the Liberation of Paris. (In the familiar photograph of de Gaulle leading a parade of *compagnons* up the Champs Élysées on the great day, Mons appears in a short row of people walking a few feet behind him.) Just after the war, he became *préfet*, or governor, of the Département de la Seine, and then he served as Governor-General of Tunisia. Briefly, he was a prominent figure in the French establishment, and his predicament was something of a sensation. He was culpable only of negligence, it turned out; instead of keeping classified information locked in his safe at all times when he wasn't in his office, he had on occasion left such material on his desk, where the two other suspects could and did misuse it. But since negligence of that kind was a serious breach of security regulations, Mons needed a lawyer.

When I asked Dumas about the case, he said, "Mons was a friend of my father and befriended me in Paris. He supplied me with money and false papers when I arrived. I was still involved with the Resistance. Then, when he was in trouble, he called me. I became his lawyer. That helped to launch me." Mons was eventually acquitted. He is now seventy-nine, but he looks at least ten years younger and still manages to travel abroad a good deal. He lives in an apartment in Paris, and I visited him there. He clearly likes and admires Dumas, but he remembers their association somewhat differently. He says he never saw Dumas before the Liberation of Paris and hence could not have supplied him with money or false papers. Not long before the Liberation, he says, Eugène Dubois told him about the death of their friend Georges Dumas, and they agreed that something would have to be done for the family. Then, a few weeks after the Liberation, he went to the Hôtel de Ville to hear Winston Churchill make a speech, in which he said that financial aid would be given to children of Resistance figures who came to study in Britain. Mons says he arranged a grant for Dumas. He also recalls giving Dumas part-time work in Paris at some later point. As for *l'affaire des fuites*, Mons says it was Dumas who got in touch with him; he was looking for legal work. Mons had already retained two lawyers, one of whom, Paul Baudet, had a considerable reputation and was in charge of the case. Dumas was taken on as the third lawyer, and, Mons says, did very well. In 1981, Mons produced a long memoir, titled "Sur les Routes de l'Histoire," in which he says just what he told me about how Dumas happened to become his third lawyer. *L'affaire des fuites* had a political aspect, because it seemed at first that its real target was not Mons but the regime of the Prime Minister, Pierre Mendès France—specifically, his Interior Minister, François Mitterrand. Dumas, by making the most of his opportunity, may have attracted the attention of some of the movers in French politics. In any case, his career, as he says, was well and truly launched.

THE origins of Dumas's long and profitable association with the French art world are somewhat obscure. He thinks that it may have started with the estate of Francis Gruber and then came André Masson. But it was probably the Galerie Leiris, on the edge of the Parc Monceau, in Paris, that provided Dumas's real introduction to this world. The gallery is named for its owner, Louise Leiris, whom everyone calls Zette. It was created in 1907 by Daniel-Henri Kahnweiler, Picasso's dealer and friend. Zette Leiris joined Kahnweiler at the gallery in 1920. During the war, Kahnweiler, a Jew, fled the city and hid out in various places, including Limoges. In 1940, he and Mme. Leiris decided that she should buy the gallery and become the owner of record. Kahnweiler returned to Paris after the Liberation and, according to Maurice Jardot, the current director, "remained the soul of the gallery until his death," in 1979. Jardot, whom I saw in Paris recently, said he thought that Dumas became the gallery's lawyer during a legal dispute involving Juan Gris and some members of his family. As Jardot was telling me this, Mme. Leiris, who is now a lively and astonishingly young eighty-three, entered Jardot's office, which adjoins her own (she is still actively involved with the affairs of the gallery), and they began arguing about whether Dumas's first case involved Juan Gris or André Masson; Mme. Leiris was firmly convinced that Masson's son, who opposed the war in Algeria, took steps that created the legal difficulties that Dumas was originally asked to handle. They selected Dumas, she says, because "he was very knowledgeable, very charming, and very alive." Jardot, who is a friend and neighbor of Dumas on the Île Saint-Louis, agreed.

Dumas's connection with Picasso began about 1966, and was responsible for bringing Chagall, Braque, Giacometti, and other artists to him as clients. It started with a dispute involving a faked Picasso that Dumas handled on behalf of the Galerie Leiris. Picasso, he says, had another, old lawyer at the time. Not long after that dispute was settled, Françoise Gilot, with whom Picasso had lived for close to a decade, and who had borne him two children, wrote a book called "Life with Picasso," which wasn't flattering and annoyed him. "She dedicated the book to him," Jardot recalled. "That's what made him angry—that and, of course, the fact that it dealt intimately with their life together." Picasso instructed his lawyer to prevent the book from being serialized in *Paris Match*. The lawyer's attempt failed, the material appeared, and, according to Dumas, Picasso then called Kahnweiler to arrange a meeting with the young lawyer who had handled the problem of the fake painting a year or so earlier. Thus began an association that lasted until Picasso's death, in 1973, and then continued in a different form as Dumas became the attorney for Picasso's widow, Jacqueline, and took on the monumental inheritance issues and also the issue of the donation of the "Guernica" to the Prado, in Madrid.

"Picasso was a very complicated but fundamentally timid man," Dumas says. They got on very well, he says, and Picasso summoned him often for tête-à-tête luncheons. Picasso did sketches of Dumas, and even painted him, bearded. (Dumas had a beard briefly.) The picture hangs in his apartment on the Quai de Bourbon. Picasso was obsessed by death, according to people who knew him well. "He couldn't make a will, because it raised the question of his death," Jardot said. "He would never talk about it." The great collector of Picasso was Picasso; he hoarded his work and would often buy back objects that had been sold. Dumas guesses that in financial terms Picasso's artistic legacy was the largest ever and from a legal point of view the most complicated ever. The ill feeling between rival legatees, and their resentment of other players in the drama, including one another's lawyers, was extreme, and still hasn't really subsided. Upon Picasso's death, the court asked Maurice Rheims, who held a semi-official role as an art appraiser for the state, to prepare an inventory of the estate, appraise it, and divide it into lots of roughly equal value, which would devolve upon the legatees once their rights had been legally determined. Rheims formed a team of three people to take the inventory and divide the collection into lots. No one of the three was a Picasso specialist. "I wanted young people with a fresh vision, not specialists," Rheims has said. Most of the participants, including Dumas, are reluctant even now to talk openly and in detail about the battle waged over the Picasso inheritance. (Dumas, characteristically, talks freely without saying much.) I spoke with each of the experts chosen by Rheims, and one of them—the most candid of them—said simply, "It is impossible to tell the story of this affair, because it would cause a useless scandal."

I asked what kind of scandal.

"A scandal about lawyers abusing the interests of clients," she replied.

The dispute over the estate began shortly after Picasso's death, in April of 1973, and wasn't concluded until February of 1980. Picasso had left behind a childless widow, Jacqueline; a son, Paulo, by his deceased first wife; Paulo's two children, Marina and Bernard (a third child of Paulo's died in 1973); and three illegitimate children—Maya Widmaier, the daughter of Marie-Thérèse Walter, and the two children of Françoise Gilot, Claude and Paloma Picasso. In 1976, the estimated value of the estate was announced to be two hundred and sixty million dollars—a figure that some experts question, since the inventory, appraisal, and division of the estate was a project that took close to six years. According to Rheims, the team he assembled did the arranging and cataloguing, and he himself did the appraising. "Nothing is more fragile than the value of an art object," he says. "Its value can change daily, and the figure varies with the market—New York, Paris, Tokyo, London." The collection was reported to include 1,885 paintings, 7,089 drawings, 3,222 ceramic works, 17,411 prints and 1,723 plates, 1,228 sculptures, 6,121 lithographs, 453 lithographic stones, eleven tapestries, and eight rugs. Although the larger part of it was in a vault in a Paris bank, a significant share was scattered around Picasso haunts. "It wasn't easy," a member of the Rheims team says. "We would find sketches under the bricks of the house in Mougins." Paulo, Picasso's only legitimate child, died in 1975, so in 1976 there remained six claimants: Jacqueline; Marina and Bernard (Paulo's children); and Maya, Claude, and Paloma, the illegitimate children. The idea, according to another member of the Rheims group, was to divide the collection into ten lots of equal value. Each lot, she said, would have some masterpieces, some very good work, other rather less good work, some work of medium quality, sketches, and so on. "Each lot had the good and the less good," she said. The outcome was inevitably controversial. One prominent museum figure, a Picasso expert, says, "The erratic valuation of Rheims meant that some heirs got no notebooks, say, whereas others were heavily into notebooks. Instead of dividing Picasso's work into various categories—paintings, sculpture, notebooks—Rheims applied a more arbitrary approach. It was a poor job—highly erratic. Rheims wasn't very knowledgeable about Picasso's work or the prices."

The legal battle had actually begun before Picasso died. It turned implicitly on who the actual heirs would be. In 1971, Claude and Paloma brought an action against Jacqueline Picasso, in which, according to Dumas, they tried to show that she was dominating their father.

I asked Dumas whether, as I'd heard, they also tried to show that Picasso was no longer mentally competent.

There was an implication of that sort, Dumas said, but nothing overt. The action failed, but a year later Claude and Paloma did become legal heirs, as a result of a change in French law which awarded illegitimate chil-

dren the right to share in their father's estate. And then, thanks to a law that had been recently enacted, called *dation en paiement*, the French state became a seventh claimant to the estate. The idea of the law was that the taxes on an artist's estate could be paid, wholly or in part, by the transfer of some of his work to the state. This law, I'm told, is unique to France. Before Picasso, it hadn't worked well; for whatever reason, the government had refused to apply it to the estates of various contemporary artists, including Alexander Calder and Max Ernst. Picasso's estate broke the pattern. French museums then possessed little of his best work; American museums had been accumulating it. French officials concerned with art saw in Picasso's death a way not just to reverse the trend but to obtain a large part of the best of his work. They were in a strong bargaining position, for the taxes on the estate were huge. "Paying them would have required the heirs to raise an obscene amount of money by selling the pictures at rapidly diminishing prices," says William Rubin, the director of painting and sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art. The interests of the heirs obviously lay in coöperating with the state, and they did coöperate. They accepted the Rheims valuation of the collection, and they agreed that, apart from works that might have sentimental value for one or another of them, the state could pick first and take what it pleased. Thus, the entire tax—about a fourth of the estate's value—was paid in works of art; these can now be seen in the Picasso Museum, which opened three months ago in a lovely old *hôtel particulier* in the Marais area of Paris.

I asked Rheims about the legal drama surrounding the estate.

"It was an absolutely remarkable team of lawyers," he said. "But Dumas had the most difficult role, because of Jacqueline. She had a neurotic passion for Picasso and his work. She identified with it—seemed to assume the role of a Roman goddess."

Jean-Denis Bredin, who represented Claude and Paloma, agrees. "She was formidable," he recalls. "She thought of herself as embodying the soul and genius of Picasso. In France, widowhood gives some women a kind of sacred mission. All this, and especially the problem of Jacqueline versus Claude and Paloma, created a very difficult situation. The family members were on the point of tearing one another apart. We were staring at what seemed a prospect of forty years of litigation. In all the turmoil, Dumas pacified Jacqueline and created an atmosphere of calm and peace. He made me think of the Congress of Vienna. I've seen him in this diplomatic role many times. He calms things down and makes them solvable."

Dumas says, "Widows of artists do identify with the artists. And Jacqueline does consider herself the custodian of Picasso's genius and soul. But in the struggle over the estate she was admirable. As the widow, she could have claimed fifty per cent, and would not have had to pay inheritance taxes, because in France a widow doesn't pay them. Only the other heirs would have had them to worry about."

Of course, if Jacqueline had claimed half the estate, the five other heirs might have been obliged to pay the entire tax, and, more important, to do so by selling off their own Picassos. Such a sale would have driven down the value of everyone's share in the estate, including Jacqueline's. Dumas was in an odd position. He had the interests of his client, Jacqueline, to protect, but the interests of the French state were also involved. Picasso's death had created the tightest possible convergence between Dumas's three domains—art, politics, and law. A deal of some kind would have to be made—and made quickly, in order to keep the dispute out of court.

"With all the antagonistic interests, Dumas could have exploited the situation and made himself even richer," says one of the people who were monitoring the state's interests. "But his line was 'If you all agree quickly, you can all benefit quickly. Otherwise, you might not benefit at all.' He reasoned that all these contesting personalities were linked by a single interest—benefitting from the enormous estate. It was very much in the family's interests to keep these works off the market. And the family's interests coincided precisely with those of the government. Dumas was the key influence. And, thanks to him, we got the pick of Pablo's estate and also of Paulo's, for Paulo happened to die while this was going on." Dumas did take good care of Jacqueline. Of the ten lots into which the collection was divided by the Rheims group, she got three. The grandchildren got two each, and the three children one each.

I asked Dumas about the other law-

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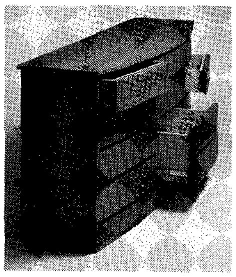

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yers—whether they, too, had been ready to forgo litigation and the fees it would have generated.

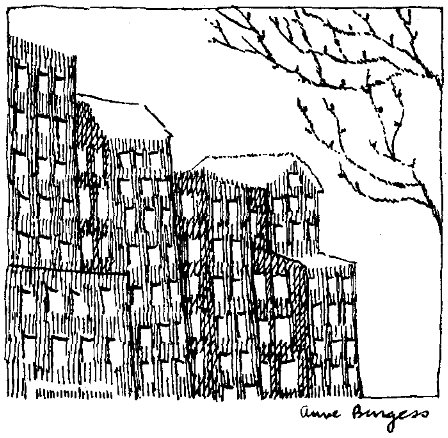
He replied, in the carefully euphemistic style that he adopts for matters of some importance, "We had skirmishes, but I managed to persuade them that we could avoid real litigation."

Dumas speaks more freely, and even with some intensity, about the "Guernica" affair, which, though it was not a legal matter, was a high point of his career. Picasso had been commissioned by the republican government of Spain, which was defeated by Franco in 1939, to do the picture for the Spanish Pavilion at the Paris World's Fair in 1937; the picture was exhibited at the fair, and in 1939 it arrived on extended loan at the Museum of Modern Art. Some years before Franco died, in November of 1975, his government began taking the position that the picture belonged to Spain, because the state had paid for it. The Museum of Modern Art began to feel pressure from Madrid to return the picture to Spain. William Rubin recalls Picasso's telling him twice that he wanted the picture to go to Spain only after democratic institutions had been restored. The museum was determined to respect the artist's wishes in the matter. Picasso considered the picture his own property, for he had given back the commission he received for painting it. A former French museum official who knew him told me that Picasso, who didn't part easily with his work, once gave MOMA a piece it coveted, not because he wanted to make a donation but because "he was, in effect, paying MOMA for having taken care of his picture—as he saw it, he was paying rent, and the rent proved the picture still belonged to him." (The piece was the Cubist sculpture of his guitar.) Dumas says he thought that in 1969 Franco sent an emissary to France's Minister of Culture to say that Spain wanted the picture. The emissary was referred to Kahnweiler; he alerted Picasso, and Picasso summoned Dumas.

"Picasso had a phobia about Franco," Dumas says. "He told me, 'This is the most important thing in my life. I can't let it go to Franco's Spain.' " Dumas says he advised Picasso to designate someone to handle the matter in the event that he should die. "That's you," he recalls Picasso's saying. "I was stunned," Dumas says, adding that he suggested putting this in writing and that a statement was duly prepared which said that "Guernica" and related drawings would be sent to Spain at such time as civil liberty was reëstablished there. Dumas says that the paper designated him as the person who would decide when, or if, political life in Spain met that condition.

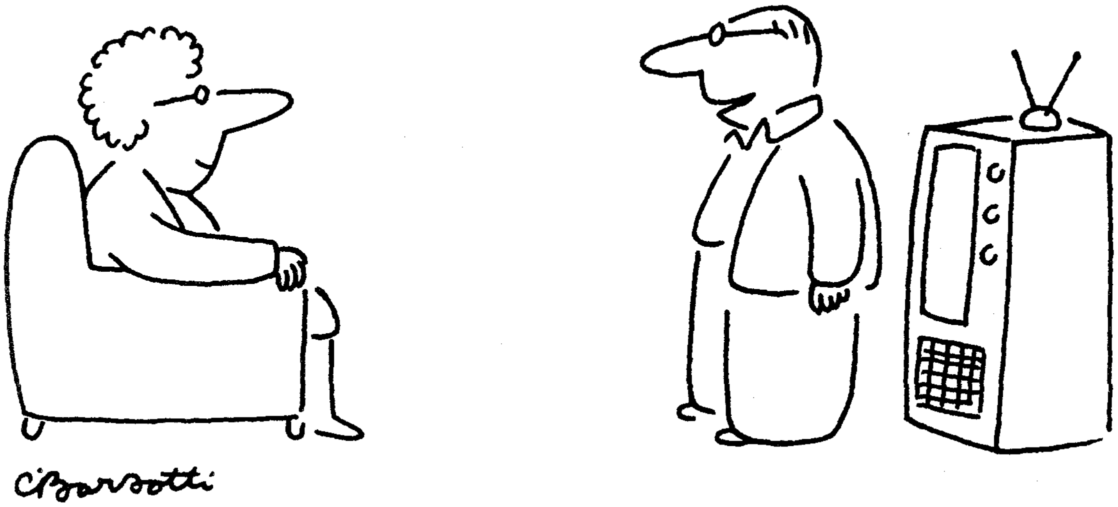
After Franco's death, Dumas found himself negotiating about the return of the painting with numerous Spanish diplomats and notables, including King Juan Carlos. He says that he had told them all the same thing: the key condition was more than the arrival of free institutions; these would have to be firmly implanted and some sense of republican continuity created. A dispute developed over just where in Spain the picture would eventually go. The Prado was an obvious place for it. The Basque town of Guernica felt that the picture belonged there. The Andalusian city of Málaga had a claim: Picasso was born there, and his style and personality were Andalusian. Barcelona's claim was stronger still: Picasso had grown and developed as a painter there, and he had given all his early drawings and watercolors to a local museum. In the end, Dumas selected the Prado, because, he says, "for Picasso, it was the Prado—the museum of Goya and Velázquez—where he himself had served as director during the revolution." The picture arrived there in September of 1981, and was put on display six weeks later in a small annex that had been created for it. Dumas was awarded Spain's loftiest honor, the Order of Isabel la Católica, for the part he played in its return.

Dumas says that Jacqueline supported what he did, but some of the other heirs did not. They still resented his dominant role in the settlement of the estate, and they felt that decisions about the "Guernica" should have been a family matter. Most of the people I spoke with felt that Picasso did just the right thing in designating Dumas. Two people who were closely involved in the inheritance struggle, however, said they strongly doubted whether Picasso ever committed his choice of Dumas to paper. "There couldn't have been such a paper, because that wasn't Picasso's way," one of them told me. Rubin, who knew Picasso well, saw the paper; he says that it consisted of only one sentence, which he describes just as Dumas described it. Rubin says that the paper didn't designate anyone to handle the "Guernica" affair, however, and he attaches less significance to it than to conversations about the problem that Picasso had with him and with Dumas.



In France, the rights of an artist are considerably broader than they are in America, and the business of representing artists is more complicated. Here a work of art is a commodity, little different from a pair of shoes. There the artist retains permanent rights to his work. Even after a work is sold, it may not be reproduced, restored, or caricatured for commercial purposes without the artist's permission. "It requires a special talent to represent artists," Jean-Denis Bredin says. "One has to be their friend and to be available and, above all, to have an artistic sense. Dumas, of course, has that."

Dumas's involvement with artists is the major source of his wealth, according to a close friend, who says, "He has made money from pictures that he has been paid with" by artist clients. "That is how he made his fortune." Dumas denies this, saying that he has never taken payment in works of art. Two other lawyers I spoke with said they doubted whether Dumas collected fees in art works, but a third—one who has represented European artists —said that most of the artists he had known preferred to pay legal fees with works of art, and that he would be surprised if Dumas hadn't been paid in that fashion. An American lawyer involved in the art world told me that American lawyers, doctors, and dentists sometimes collected fees from artists in works of art, if only to avoid taxes. The extent of Dumas's art collection is unclear. I was told that there were numerous works by Picasso, Braque, and Giacometti; a great many drawings; numerous photographs of Dumas and Picasso; and, of course, the picture Picasso did of Dumas. The major part of the collection is supposed to be in Dumas's apartment on the Île Saint-Louis; I expected to see it there,



“What’ll it be—the Nightly News with Tom Brokaw, the Evening News with Dan Rather, World News Tonight with Peter Jennings, or, the heck with it, a Martini with a twist?”

• •

but was unable to do so. Four days after Dumas’s appointment as Foreign Minister, *Le Monde* had an article, under the headline “THE AMBIGUOUS CHARM OF ROLAND DUMAS,” that said, “Contrary to legend, he doesn’t have a ‘collection’ of Picasso, but instead some drawings the painter gave him and a few very lovely works of Giacometti and Masson.” At the house in Bordeaux, I saw a Giacometti sculpture (“La Grande Femme”), a Picasso lithograph, two Chagalls, and three Massons (each from a different period). In Dumas’s office at the Quai d’Orsay, I saw a Picasso from the Cubist period, a wonderful Giacometti painting of a skull, and a small Giacometti drawing. Behind the desk were photographs: of his daughter, Delphine; of his father in an Army uniform; of Léon Blum making a speech in Limoges in 1936; and of Dumas himself with Danielle Mitterrand, the wife of the President.

What is indisputably clear about Dumas is his resourcefulness as a lawyer. On this, the article in *Le Monde*, which was surprisingly harsh and personal (Dumas usually has a good press), gave him full marks. A New York art dealer, who is the American representative of the Galerie Leiris (she doesn’t want her name mentioned, because her gallery is a recurring target of art thieves), told me a story that gave a good glimpse of Dumas at work. About fifteen years ago, she said, she lost some Picasso originals and graphics in a robbery, and three or four years later a man walked into the Galerie Leiris trying to sell those pictures. “Zette Leiris saw right away that the numbers on the graphics had been changed—she did all the numbering on Picasso’s things—and called the police,” she said. “The man was furious. I went to see the French police, accompanied by an F.B.I. agent who was on the case. We had photos of the pictures which seemed to prove where they belonged. But the judge ruled against us, at which point Zette called in Dumas. In five days, he discovered that the man in question belonged to a ring of art thieves. In no time, we had all the pictures back. I’ll never get over what he did, the power he must have had to be able to do it, and the speed with which he got to the bottom of it.”

Picasso aside, Dumas probably never had a more useful client, or one that kept him busier, than *Le Canard Enchaîné*. I visited *Le Canard’s* offices, near the Palais Royal, and discussed Dumas, and the various cases he handled for the paper, with Claude Angeli, a senior figure there, who is called Commissaire by other journalists, because he is so well informed. Michel Gaillard, who works closely with Angeli and is known for having an exceptional memory, was also there. I asked how Dumas came to be *Le Canard’s* lawyer. I was told that in 1969 the paper carried a sensational story saying that a shadowy but powerful figure named Jacques Foccart, who was nominally in charge of African affairs in the Gaullist era but was widely thought to run France’s secret services, had bugged de Gaulle’s office and could listen to everything that went on there. Foccart brought a defamation suit against the paper. *Le Canard* had already decided to change lawyers. Dumas, according to Angeli and Gaillard, had good relations with the press, and they themselves had got to know him well when he was a deputy. They told me, “We wanted someone not too severe; someone who could argue with humor; someone who could say harsh things with a smile; someone with charm as well as ability; someone who could make the telling points and make people, including judges, smile at the same time”—someone, in short, who embodied the style of the paper itself. *Le Canard* had run the story about Foccart without a shred of evidence to support it—Angeli and Gaillard admitted this—but felt sure of its accuracy. During the trial, they told me, Dumas handled his seemingly impossible brief “with elegance, humor, and subtlety.” Although Dumas was repeatedly admonished by the judge to confine himself to the issue before the court, he managed to blur it, by creating an impression that Foccart had been playing fast and loose with various official regulations; although these had nothing to do with bugging the Presidential office, in the end the judge threw out Foccart’s complaint, and the union between *Le Canard* and Dumas was sealed. Among the other cases he handled for the paper, the best-known is a complaint actually brought by *Le Canard* against the government—a kind of man-bites-dog affair. One night in 1973, while Georges Pompidou was President, André Escaro, a cartoonist for *Le Canard*, surprised counter-intelligence agents disguised as plumbers in the act of installing microphones on the premises, the office of the director included. The case dragged on for some time after Giscard became President, in 1974, but was eventually dropped, since it was most unlikely that any French government would allow the scourge of government cops, *Le Canard*, to humble them in court. The state was obliged to pay *Le Canard’s* legal costs, however, and the paper takes satisfaction from that. On

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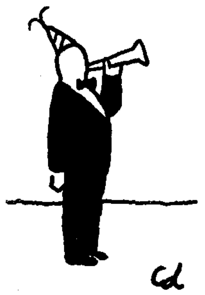
a wall in the third-floor office of the director, Roger Fressoz, there is a marble plaque that reads "Gift of Marcellin (Raymond) 1968-1974. Here, during the night of 3 December, 'plumbers' were caught in the very act of installing microphones." Raymond Marcellin was Minister of the Interior in the years noted.

Dumas and *Le Canard* were heavily involved in other celebrated cases, though not always as lawyer and client. One was the Ben Barka affair, the great scandal of the Gaullist era. Mehdi Ben Barka was the most important of dissident Moroccan political figures. In the fall of 1965, he was seized and abducted by French secret agents as he was about to enter the Brasserie Lipp for lunch; they delivered him to some Moroccan colleagues of theirs who were being allowed to operate in France. Ben Barka was tortured and killed; his body was never found, and is believed to have been dropped from an airplane into the Mediterranean. Dumas represented Ben Barka's family in a complaint against the state, which never went very far. He did the same for the family of Stefan Markovic, an unsavory character who was killed, probably by gangsters, in a sensational affair that quickly became political; a few prominent Gaullists—enemies of their fellow-Gaullist Pompidou, who hadn't yet become President—helped to spread a rumor that Pompidou's wife, Claude, had been mixed up in parties of an unwholesome nature that Markovic had arranged. The story gradually faded away, and Pompidou managed to avoid harm from it. But again the wheels of justice didn't turn. Though some solid clues seemed to establish who had killed Markovic, no one was ever arrested for his murder.



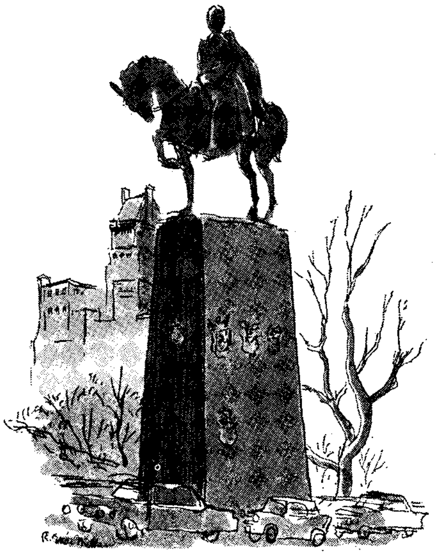
In both cases, *Le Canard* was the point of the spear journalistically. In the stranger and even more sensational murder of Prince Jean de Broglie, a prominent political figure, Dumas represented a policeman named Guy Simoné, who had recruited the gangster who did the job. *Le Canard* played its part in the drama that followed, and I asked Angeli why Dumas had represented Simoné. "Because it was a great case and he wanted to be involved in it," Angeli said. De Broglie was a former Minister of State at the Quai d'Orsay and a close political ally of President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing; he had helped Giscard create his political party, and he was a cousin of Giscard's wife, Anne-Aymone. He was shot on December 24, 1976, on a sidewalk in Paris. A few months later, on April 2nd, *Le Canard* published a police report proving, according to Angeli and Gaillard, that three months before the event the police had unearthed a plot to kill de Broglie, and containing the names of the people involved. Their piece, they told me, also showed that most of the important police officials lied about the affair. Angeli and Gaillard think that these people should have been arrested, but no complaints were ever brought against any of them, by either Giscard's government or Mitterrand's. Just what lay behind de Broglie's murder is still unclear. As for Dumas, he did well by his client Simoné—the *inspecteur-truand*, *Le Canard* called him. He drew a sentence of only ten years—"a gift," says a friend of Dumas.

The last of the lurid cases in which Dumas took part was that of the Bokassa diamonds—the controversial gift of precious stones from Emperor Bokassa, of the Central African Republic, to Giscard. Here Dumas represented a writer named Roger Delpey, who had interviewed Bokassa a few times but had committed no crime. Delpey was arrested by the French counter-intelligence people and jailed; the charge was that he had worked with foreign intelligence agents to the detriment of French external interests. After a few months, Dumas obtained his release.

THE Delpey case occurred a year or so before Mitterrand became President, at a time when Dumas's legal career was prospering but his political career was languishing. After being elected to the Assembly in 1956, from Limoges, Dumas lost his seat in elections called in 1958, when de Gaulle returned to power. In 1967, he was elected again—this time from Brive, in the Corrèze—but he lost again in a Gaullist sweep of elections called after the calamitous Events of May, 1968, and the dissolution of parliament that followed them. Dumas's parliamentary career, having been twice short-circuited by de Gaulle, then seemed to be behind him. But in 1981 Mitterrand asked—or perhaps, told—Dumas to run under his banner from Périgueux. Victory there was its own small reward, however, because Mitterrand didn't give him a job—not until the fall of 1983. Only Mitterrand knows why he then brought Dumas in from the cold, but theories abound. My own is that he discovered he needed someone just like Dumas—a natural diplomat and problem solver. And Mitterrand also needed to know from experience that the person he chose would offer unquestioning loyalty along with these other qualities. Some people would demur, saying that Dumas was already very useful to Mitterrand as an unofficial and confidential emissary to some foreign governments and as a contact man with sources of financial support and with the press. All this is probably true, but Mitterrand still seems to have felt a need to bring Dumas out of the shadows in order to manage problems that would have to be dealt with more or less openly, in an orthodox government-to-government fashion. In late 1983, the most urgent of these was the European Community, for Mitterrand would begin to serve as its president in January of 1984; the job is rotated among member countries for six-month terms. The organization had been bogged down for a decade in a dispute with Britain over the size of Britain's annual contribution to the budget. The dispute was about to become a full-blown crisis, since a failure to resolve it seemed to mean that the Community would run out of money sometime in 1984. Then as now, Mitterrand's standing in French opinion polls was very low; he was determined to have the Community's incubus removed during his six months as president, and, in the bargain, strengthen his claim to being Europe's premier European. Accomplishing all that would be Dumas's immediate task—one of herculean complexity. Very few of the people in the European capitals who dealt with the budgetary problem had actually mastered their briefs. Dumas did so, and quickly.

In June of 1984, a settlement was approved by the heads of government. It had been devised by a handful of French and British diplomats working under the close direction of Dumas and Sir Geoffrey Howe. The British team, along with Europeans who had been watching from the wings, gave Dumas rave reviews. "Cheysson kept telling us we had to yield because it was nine to one against us," a British diplomat recalls of Dumas's predecessor. "He thought that if we all just looked at the problem long enough it would go away. But Dumas realized that the costs to France without a solution would be very great. He wanted one." Another member of the British group says, "Mitterrand is very unpredictable, and Dumas was important to us because he could provide clues to Mitterrand's thinking and intentions. It is always hard for us to guess what they are, or even to identify his sense of his own political interests. His intentions were never more unclear than when he took over the presidency of the Community." A senior French diplomat says, "Dumas's first question on taking over the European portfolio was 'What do the British want? Where are the points of convergence in their position and ours?' He divided the essential from the nonessential, and he listened." All the British also note that Dumas was a very good listener, and one of them, who has known him a long time, says, "He has the wit to see you have to trust people until you can't trust them." Everyone also agrees that Dumas never says a word more than he has to; some diplomats assigned to Paris complain that he says so little that they have trouble reporting the French government's views.

"He is rather British," a senior British diplomat says. Many people describe the Dumas style as British—as a performance that appears so effortless it obscures the careful behind-the-scenes preparation. "The style is look-no-hands and *on s'ennuie horriblement* while doing it," another British diplomat says. "He cultivates British amateurism," says an American counterpart. Dumas also happens to be a very quick study. "After just three months on the job, he could make speeches off the cuff to various interest groups—farmers, industrialists—with no mistakes," a member of his political staff says. "He doesn't prepare his speeches any more than he prepared his courtroom statements," she says, adding that he races through the dossiers "reading diagonally and understanding everything—but he is always a few minutes late." His tardiness, which often exceeds a few minutes, is noticed and commented on. What is less often noticed but is equally characteristic is his capacity for sustained hard work. Dumas's working day begins in the early morning and normally stretches well into the evening—occasionally to midnight or later. An old friend of his told me that sometimes, at Dumas's request, he phoned him at his office around midnight, and that once or twice Dumas had been too busy to talk and had asked him to call him again, at home, at around 1 A.M. Dumas worked that way as a lawyer, and he told me he thought that the bar had been very good preparation for his current job. He feels that he has other useful attributes, too, including a gift for languages, of which he is very proud. He conducts business in Spanish, English, and German, and he is currently learning Russian. He is said to play Russian-language tapes frequently in his car, and last summer he told me that when Mikhail Gorbachev, the General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, visited France, in early October, he intended to speak Russian to him during ceremonial occasions and French in working sessions. At a meeting of the heads of government of the European Community in Milan last June, Margaret Thatcher and Helmut Kohl fell into a long and heated argument; neither speaks or understands the other's language, and Dumas interpreted for both, according to a member of his staff.



At the Quai, although feelings about Dumas are mixed, people find working with him very pleasant when they are given the opportunity to do so, in part because he delegates. "But he is very secretive, and we have to live with that," one senior diplomat says. Dumas relies less on bodyguards than his immediate predecessors did—at least in Paris—because he feels they limit his flexibility. Secrecy is sometimes a problem for him, too. "Mitterrand rarely puts all his cards on the table, even with Dumas," says a fellow Foreign Minister, who sees Mitterrand as "a conductor and the people around him as instruments, which he calls in to play a passage when it suits him." Mitterrand unquestionably likes being able to draw on diverse talents and have them compete for his ear. Dumas's chief rival is Jacques Attali, a former professor, who does have Mitterrand's ear and, in theory, controls access to him, because his office blocks the passage to Mitterrand's. Attali has a quick and creative mind—far too creative, according to some diplomats. They know that the ideas toyed with by Mitterrand that they most deplore are invariably traceable to Attali. So far, he and Dumas seem to be evenly matched, although Dumas, the older man, has known Mitterrand much longer and has been through hard political times with him. Some say that Dumas is really Mitterrand's lawyer for foreign policy, while Attali is his "thinker," or counsellor. When I asked Dumas about that, he said he has both roles. But a British diplomat who has seen the two men at close range and likes and admires Dumas disagrees. "He is the fixer—the lawyer who fixes things," he says. "He isn't someone who looks far ahead—not much beyond the summer break."

At first, Dumas's reputation as a dilettante in politics was a liability in his current job, but he now seems to have overcome it. He was also regarded as too sympathetic to Arab and North African causes. During France's torment over Algeria, he defended such people as Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, who were under pressure from the state because of their open support for Algerian nationalists. He knew Muammar Qaddafi and represented Libyan interests, and that displeased some people; and because he had represented known Arab terrorists various Jewish groups questioned his appointment. But these and other misgivings also seem to have subsided. Dumas has made some mistakes since coming to the Quai, but only one that appears to have mattered. It involved Chad, which he describes as having been "an arena of difficulties for every French President—de Gaulle, Pompidou, and Giscard." French troops were there, trying to settle a civil war in which Libya had intervened with its forces. In the fall of 1984, Dumas, who hadn't yet replaced Cheysson at the helm and was still in the role of trouble-shooter, made a deal with Qaddafi that provided for a parallel withdrawal of French and Libyan troops. Mitterrand agreed to solemnize the deal in a meeting with Qaddafi, who wanted to be seen consulting with the President of France. French intelligence, which had the task of monitoring Libya's withdrawal, reported soon after the deal was struck that Qaddafi's troops had left Chad. However, in mid-November, on the eve of Mitterrand's departure for Crete to meet with Qaddafi, Washington informed Paris that pictures taken by an American reconnaissance satellite showed Libyan troops to be still in Chad. State Department sources then said as much publicly, and Mitterrand, who had gone ahead with the meeting in Crete, was acutely embarrassed. Although Qaddafi still hasn't moved his troops out of Chad, Dumas told me that he thought the deal had actually succeeded, "because the Libyan troops are way out in the desert, where they can't do any harm." Mitterrand might not agree.

People wonder whether someone as interesting and versatile as Dumas has any special goals for French policy. Cheysson, for instance, tried to concentrate on the Third World. The fact is that Dumas's concerns necessarily reflect Mitterrand's. His job at the Quai—no less, really, than Attali's at the Élysée—is to consolidate Mitterrand's control of the foreign-policy process. "One cannot specialize," Dumas told me. "But Europe has become a priority." He meant that Mitterrand had made progress at the European Community level his first priority, and most diplomats agree that Mitterrand has no alternative. "French horizons are shrinking, and the real game is Europe," an American diplomat in Paris says. "There is enormous worry about the technology gap with us. All this marks a changing outlook in France about Europe, and the Socialists are aware of it."

What Dumas thinks about the issues that go with his job is unclear. He may not think much about them at all. Dumas is the sort of person who is given tough jobs to do without being expected to ponder their larger meaning. Still, a few people who know him well feel that work he did as a lawyer on behalf of political causes does reflect a commitment to human rights. Some diplomats who have heard him talk about repressive political regimes in South America echo that view of him. (Someone who knows and admires him once said, "He isn't a man of the left, yet he is a liberal.") But he is believed to lack an equally strong commitment to anything else. "He wasn't much of a European at first," says a French diplomat, a man who thinks that the crucial importance to Dumas of his father's death at German hands impeded his progress as a European, since the Community is seen as the vehicle for French-German reconciliation. By now, however, Dumas has impressed the diplomats he works with as reliably European—"a European without illusions," a British diplomat says, adding, "Without Europe, France would be a small country. Dumas understands that." Dumas told me that he handled the European file himself.

In recent months, Dumas has had to devote himself to a project called Eureka, which is supposed to help Europe reduce its technology gap with the United States and Japan, and also give the brightest lights in various sectors of European science and industry an alternative to participation in the American Star Wars program. It is a French-led project involving collaborative efforts by European companies to exploit most of the same technologies as Star Wars but mainly for commercial purposes. The thinking behind Eureka is very close to Mitterrand's heart; he has been brooding for years about Europe's laggard performance in advanced technology. Moreover, there are parliamentary elections in March, which, if the polls and pundits are right, his government is destined to lose. The real question is probably how large the opposition's majority will be. Most of what Mitterrand does in the period before the elections will be aimed at cutting his losses. Even to approach winning would require a minor miracle. Eureka isn't the stuff of miracles, but it might become a good card for Mitterrand to play, and he won't have many good cards; he could appear as the leader who is preparing Europe for the twenty-first century instead of allowing the old continent to founder in an American-Japanese wake. Whether Eureka does create any such politically useful aura will depend largely on Dumas, who is in charge of it. Nothing much has happened yet, and the chances that other European governments, plus the companies, will agree to pull together in the same direction may prove to be nearly as dim as Mitterrand's political prospects.

Whatever happens, Dumas's days at the Quai are probably numbered. Some success on the European front, together with a bit of good economic news, might narrow the Mitterrand government's expected margin of defeat, but control of the French National Assembly would still pass to his opponents. In France's republican experience, there is no precedent for a chief executive and a parliamentary majority representing directly opposed political blocs. After the March elections, Mitterrand will probably try to continue governing until the completion of his term, in 1987. He is already talking about "cohabitation," the current buzzword in French political circles. For Mitterrand, that would mean sharing power—forming a new government and allowing many of the key ministries to pass into the hands of moderate figures within the opposition. His own Foreign Minister was likely to be among the casualties, even though the constitution of the Fifth Republic gives the President special responsibility for foreign and defense policy.

Having been a minister will be an advantage for Dumas. In France, the title *ancien ministre* carries a weight that can only help a lawyer returning to the bar, and in Dumas's case it should give further latitude—hence freedom—to his life.

I asked him whether he thought his political career, which means so much to him, had been a success.

"Yes," he said. "Now that I am a minister."

I pointed out that in not many months he might well be back in the Rue de Bièvre practicing law.

Dumas didn't disagree, nor did he seem at all bothered by the prospect. "I'm interested in everything," he said enigmatically. —JOHN NEWHOUSE

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CORRECTIONS

A cutline in the Nov. 7 issue of *Circulating Pines* misspelled the name of Caroline Aguirre, and she was taken to Unity Hospital.—*Circle Pines (Minn.) Circulating Pines.*

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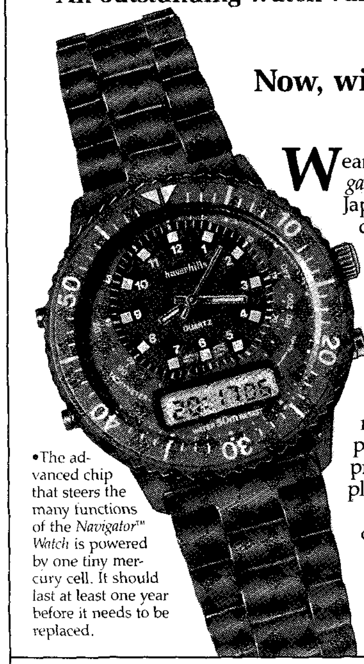

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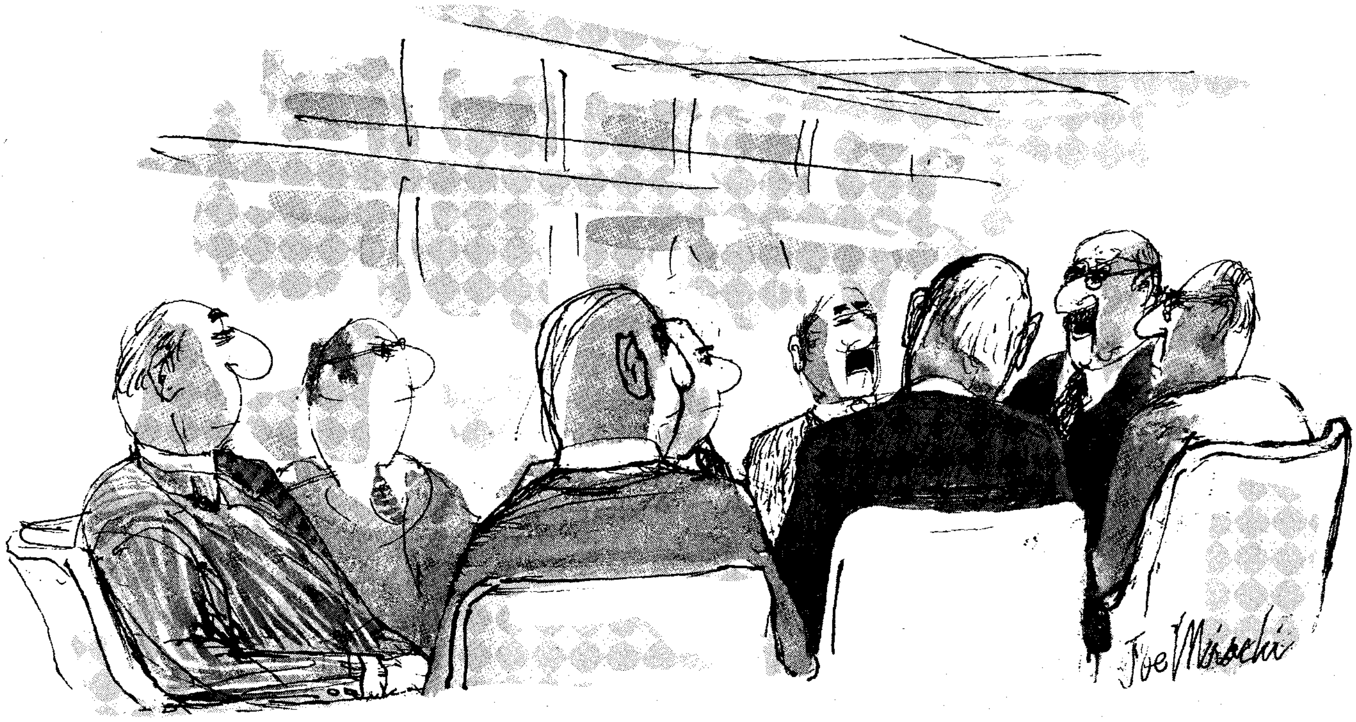
THE THEATRE

Off Broadway

HOW pampered we are to have the Roundabout's revival of "Mrs. Warren's Profession," with Uta Hagen in the title role, giving a star performance of a kind we rarely get in the theatre today. She plays Shaw's "rowdy," rich middle-aged woman of lower-class origins without any of that fake Cockney which so often serves as a substitute for characterization in both American and British productions. Miss Hagen belts out her lines with great intelligence and emotion, and with generosity, too, never overwhelming Pamela Reed—remarkable, but no belter—who acts her daughter and, to some extent, counterpart in an entirely different style. Vivie, the young Shavian New Woman—clear-headed, independent, and respectable—must first learn of her mother's profession as manager of a string of bordellos all over Europe, a profession that freed Mrs. Warren from the wretched poverty of her youth; must then sympathize with and accept her mother; and, when she learns near the end that Mrs. Warren and her partner are still making a fortune from prostitution, must reject her. The plot, as can readily be seen, gives Shaw ample opportunity for some trenchant comment on the position and entrapment of women.

When I first saw the play, in a dim Off Broadway production over twenty years ago, I wrote, "In spite of many lines . . . that are stinging and sound, and in spite of Shaw's wit and high spirits, which are, as ever, irresistible, there is an underlying prudishness that is very resistible indeed and needs to be masked by good acting." The masking has been accomplished; at any rate, I was barely aware of the prudishness that bothered me way back then. Aside from Harris Yulin, who is very good as Mrs. W.'s titled partner, the supporting company is weak. The first-rate setting, lighting, and costumes were designed by Andrew Jackness, Frances Aronson, and Nan Cibula, respectively; John Madden was the capable director.

"THE BEACH HOUSE," by Nancy Donohue, is a lighthearted (and headed) romantic comedy, and only a stuffed seagull that someone brings on near the end of the first act reminds us that we are in the Chekhov country of Circle Rep 1985, and not somewhere in the West Forties in, say, 1938. There are many worse places and times, though, and there are many worse crimes than the pervasive silliness of the script, which I happen to have found sporadically appealing—more than that, actually, in the deft hands of Swoosie Kurtz and George Grizzard, under the able direction of Melvin Bernhardt. There is surely something to be said for a cheerful, unpretentious play that tells a story and, on the side, evokes some laughter (mine). The story is about a woman of thirty-seven called Annie, an ex-nun, who is boning up for her bar exams and is persuaded to take a room in the beach house of a distinguished doctor and professor of medicine at Yale, the persuader being his fifteen-year-old son. The doctor's wife has recently left him, and although he is presumably doing his best to cheer up the depressed boy he is unable to discuss anything personal with his son—not even the medical research that has just won him a foundation grant. Annie is more than preoccupied with strong ideas about feminism in general and the independence of women, and it might as well be said straight out that while Miss Donohue shows some aptitude for character and comedy she shows little if any for seriousness and should steer clear of it. But even the prosy stretches in the script are brought to life by the captivating Miss Kurtz and the splendid Mr. Grizzard, who are absolutely incapable of dullness. Time after time, they take us by



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surprise, enhancing Miss Donohue's jokiness with their own considerable comedic gifts. Another enhancement is the convincing and touching performance by Robert Leonard as the stormy fifteen-year-old. The setting—the kitchen and terrace of the house, a mess at the beginning, spruced up once Miss K. is in residence—is the good work of David Potts, who designed it, and of Dennis Parichy and Mal Sturchio, who lighted it. Jennifer von Mayrhauser's costumes are, as usual, exactly right.

UPSTAIRS at the New Federal, Woodie King, Jr., is presenting "In the House of Blues," a diminutive, engaging musical with a book by David Charles and songs by the best blues composers who have ever lived. In the thread of story that is more than sufficient for the purpose, a young woman and her boyfriend come to an old Mississippi night club that she has inherited and plans to sell. The club, they learn from a Mr. Blues, is the one where Bessie Smith gave her final performance, before her fatal accident; and the place soon comes to life with her ghost and the ghosts of other great singers, who, one by one, sing out what amounts to a history of the blues. These singers, indicated rather than seriously impersonated by the able company, include, among many others, Mamie Smith, Ma Rainey, and Alberta Hunter, and end up with Billie Holiday—the last blues singer, according to Mr. Charles, although I imagine that that claim is arguable. The songs, many of them sung and danced to without attribution by Larry Marshall, Debra Byrd, David Connell, and Katie Love, among others, sound fine. The contribution of John McCallum, the musical director, at the piano is also sizable. The show runs a little over two hours, and could have lasted twice as long for all of me.

—EDITH OLIVER

•

Karen Duffy, associate media director at Frankenberry, Laughlin & Constable, wore a two-piece white rayon slip dress by Calvin Klein. The dress had an overlay of silk which was sashed at the hip she bought at Neiman Marcus.—*Milwaukee Sentinel.*

Neiman Marcus has everything.

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WATERLOO-MORADA TAX REJECTED —*Stockton (Calif.) Record, page A-4.*

WATERLOO-MORADA TAX OK'D —*Same issue, page B-10.*

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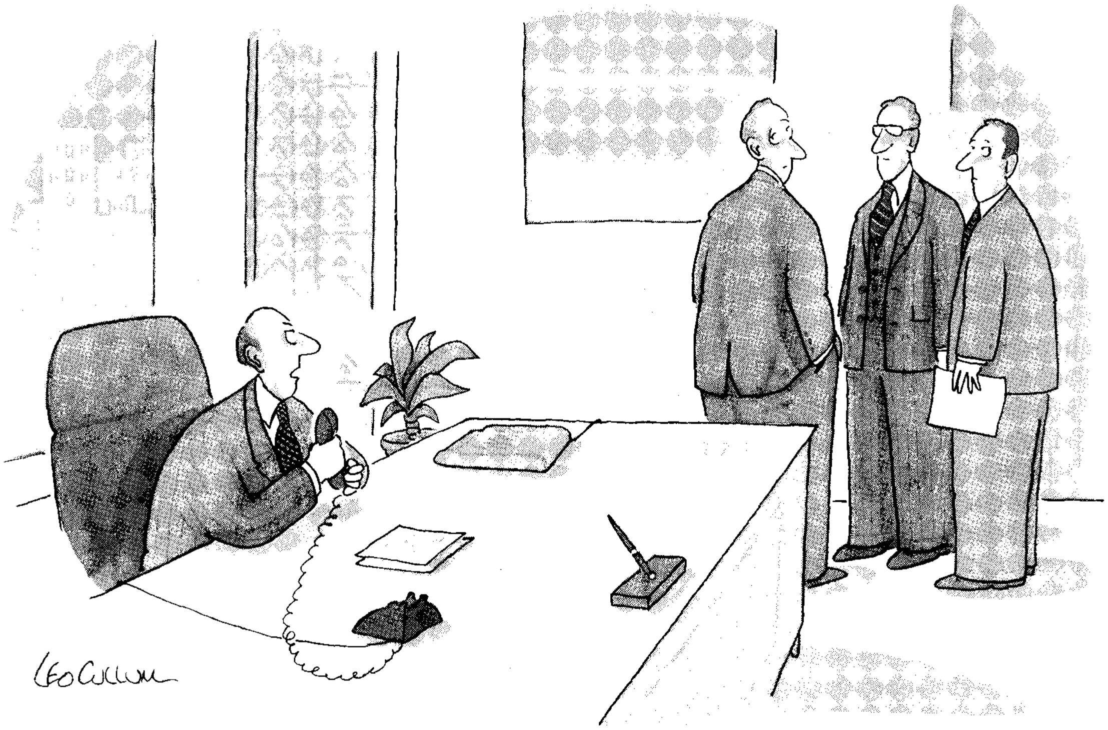
AROUND CITY HALL

THIN SKINS

NEW YORKERS who feel most at ease when the people who govern them have familiar names and faces should feel quite comfortable in the years just ahead. It appears that they'll have the same President until January 20th, 1989, and, thanks to a smashing victory in the recent municipal election, the same mayor for at least the next four years. Reporters wondering whether, during those years, Mayor Edward Koch would be preoccupied with his place in history asked him on Election Night what he hoped people would say about him at the end of his third term, which begins January 1st. "That I should be elected for another four years" was his response, and he has also said on occasion that he plans to remain in charge at City Hall "forever." It is true that the term of New York's governor, Mario Cuomo, ends in 1986. At the moment, however, the Republicans are engaged in an unseemly public scramble to find somebody—anybody—who will agree to make the race against him. "Why anybody wants to run against Mario Cuomo I can't for the life of me imagine," one upstate Republican county chairman said this fall. According to a late-November poll by the *Daily News* and Eyewitness News, the local ABC news program, Cuomo had a seventy-nine-per-cent approval rating among New York residents of all parties. This number and Koch's capturing of seventy-eight per cent of the vote last month surely suggest that most New Yorkers are content with the way things have been going in their state and city. The Mayor's victory did cost him—or, rather, his contributors—over seven million dollars, which, as Frank Lombardi noted in the *Daily News*, was two million dollars more than was spent by both the Republican and the Democratic candidates in this year's campaign for the New Jersey governorship. The Mayor's disconsolate opponents also like to point out that what he won by was seventy-eight per cent of the lowest mayoral-election turnout in generations—that only thirty-eight per cent of the three million registered New Yorkers bothered to vote. One reason for the low total may have been an event that City Hall would rather not talk about. On Election Night, CBS showed "Stone Pillow," the two-hour drama in which Lucille Ball played a bag lady who much preferred the painful and risky life on the streets and in the caverns under Grand Central to that in the shelters for the homeless provided by the city, which were presented as dangerous places, run by representatives of local government who were not always kind or responsible. This grim version of present-day life in New York did very well in the national ratings. In the city, it was the evening's most popular television program. Apparently, some New Yorkers stayed home to be shown how bad things are here instead of going out and voting, one way or another, for someone they thought might possibly make things better.

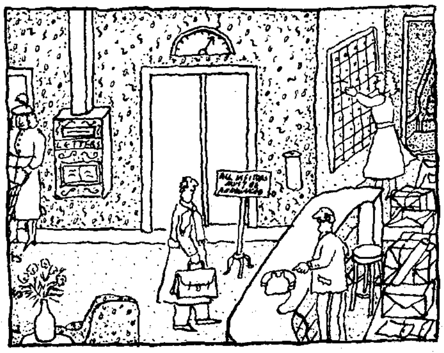
A dilemma that politicians who have been in office for some time are faced with is that it gets progressively harder for them to find someone to blame for anything that is not going well in their domain. Though they will make a bold try of it, President Reagan, about to begin his sixth year in office, and Koch, starting on his ninth, cannot easily get away with the time-honored practice of faulting the previous administration: they *are* the previous administration. After Koch's victory with sixty-four per cent of the vote in this year's Democratic primary, a cartoon in the *Daily News* showed him, wearing ermine and a large crown, enthroned in what was identified as "the Royal Borough of New York." The royal escutcheon said, "How'm I Doin'?" On the tops of all the buildings seen through the window were statues of "King Koch," while one of the fawning courtiers around him said, "Remember the old days, Your Majesty, when we had to suffer those tiresome elections?" In some respects, the powers of the imperial Presidency, often the subject of disapproving political comment, are nothing to those of the imperial mayoralty in this city. Unlike the President, the Mayor cannot put the blame for unfortunate developments on the opposition party and its control of one legislative house: the members of this city's government who stood for reelection this year included not a single Republican. Beginning January 1st, there will be one Republican among



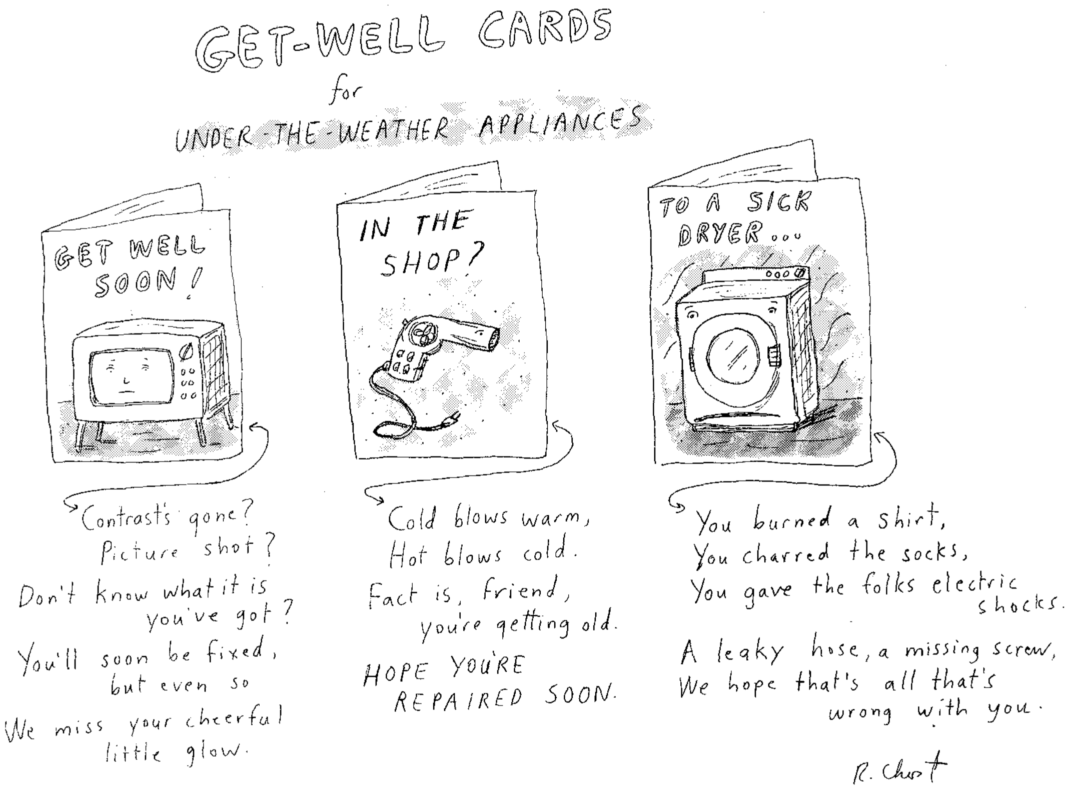
"I've got the Los Angeles office on the line. Does anyone need avocados?"

local elected officials: a new City Council member from Staten Island. In any event, the City Council and the Board of Estimate nearly always vote exactly as the Mayor wants them to, so they aren't likely targets for the blame game. Nor are there in this city most of the legislative checks and balances on the executive which Presidents and governors have to deal with. The mayor here is free to appoint judges, cabinet members, and, in most cases, commissioners without the constitutional requirement of confirmation by a legislative body. Many past mayors have been able to lay things off on clubhouse leaders, but nearly all the local Democratic bosses are now staunch Koch allies. What to do? During the last year, the Mayor's position has been that a considerable number of the problems that continue to plague the city should be blamed not on his administration but on the way the press covers them. Like the President, the Mayor likes to accuse reporters of being the gloom-and-doom crowd, ever accentuating the negative instead of, for example, dwelling on the rosier aspects of his administration's record. "Did you ever see a happy headline?" Koch asked at a press conference a couple of years ago. "How about 'Koch Wins Reëlection by a Landslide'?" suggested William Murphy, then the Associated Press bureau chief at City Hall. "Some people didn't even think *that* was good news," said the Mayor, accentuating the negative himself this time.

RELATIONS between public officials and the representatives of news organizations who write about them are rarely jovial. Most office-holders don't go as far as the former governor of Washington State, Dixie Lee Ray, who named the pigs on her farm after reporters whose articles had particularly offended her, but even John F. Kennedy, whom the press was often accused of being too easy on, referred to the Washington press corps as "the crocodiles." Such hostilities are doubtless of more interest to reporters and politicians than they are to the general public—though lately they have also been a major concern in the courts, where huge libel damages against media representatives have been voted by trial juries, only in many instances to be overturned by appellate courts. The fact that important libel cases are often tried in this city—a year ago, those of General William Westmoreland against CBS and former Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon against Time, Inc. were being heard in the same courthouse on Foley Square—is a natural result of New York's standing as an international communications center. It is also true, however, that small wars, legal and otherwise, between political figures and those who have responsibility for getting out the news are something of a local tradition—one that goes all the way back to 1735. In that year, John Peter Zenger, the printer of the *New-York Weekly Journal*, was tried and acquitted, in the original City Hall, on a charge of "seditious libel" for having published articles critical of New York's royal governor—a case that is often described as having given birth to the American principle of freedom of the press. Much later, it was a New York politician who applied the term "muckraker" to certain journalists, leaving no doubt that he was directing it mainly at writers, among them Lincoln Steffens, who, in such New York publications as *McClure's* and *Everybody's*, had been aggressively exposing the wealthy and powerful, in and out of government: on March 5, 1906, at the annual dinner of the Gridiron Club, Theodore Roosevelt, a New York politician who by that time had moved on to the White House, compared what he judged to be the writers' preoccupation with the negative aspects of American life to that of the Man with the Muckrake in John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," who "could look no way but downward," continuing to rake the filth, even when he was offered "the celestial crown." Actually, the invocation of the Bunyan fable in connection with press coverage had been appropriated by the President from an editorial a few weeks earlier in the New York *Post* which accused the editor of *Town Topics*, a local scandal sheet, of "muckrakism." The *Post*, though a far more stately publication then than the present paper of that name, was capable of similarly feverish editorial outbursts. The crusade of some of Roosevelt's friends against *Town Topics*, which ended up in the courts, had been set in motion by an item that imputed improper behavior not to Roosevelt but to his daughter Alice—the lady who would be celebrated in the later years of her long life (she died in 1980) for a pillow on her sitting-room couch bearing the needlepoint message "If you can't say something good about someone, sit right here by me." The President's Gridiron Club attack on the offending writers did not have the effect he may have wished. Far from being abashed, they immediately began to refer to themselves as "muckrakers," taking the term as a compliment. "Today's muckrakers," William Safire has commented, a bit grumpily, "prefer the term 'investigative reporter.' "


ALL VISITORS MUST BE ANNOUNCED

If the city's present mayor seems to be taking out after the local press, he is by no means the first to do so. There was, for example, Mayor William J. Gaynor (1910-13), whose name has come up lately at City Hall because he was in charge of the city the last time Halley's comet was visible in the sky. (Some New Yorkers might conclude that this was not the only thing that Gaynor and the present City Hall incumbent had in common. "New York never had a mayor who was so pervasive of the public presence," the New York *Herald* said in its Gaynor obituary. "When he took the stage, there was no other actor on it.") Room 9, the fifteen-by-twenty-four-foot area that is the headquarters for twenty or so reporters assigned to City Hall, has been the pressroom there since sometime in the last century. Once, in the late nineteen-thirties, when there was a move to evict the press in favor of the City Planning Commission, the reporters barricaded the door with a strand of barbed wire and physically held their ground until the hostile forces withdrew. The room has recently been repainted, and the portrait of Gaynor is back on the wall, high up on the west side of the room, where it has hung for as long as anyone can remember. No one knows whether whoever chose Gaynor to look down on the reporters was aware of his profound contempt for the press. Routinely, he described local newspapers as "corrupt," "lying," "degenerate," "ragbag," and "blackleg." In August, 1910, after he was shot in the neck by a discharged city employee, he declared that the crime was a direct consequence of incendiary lies published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for
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IN THE SHOP?
Cold blows warm, Hot blows cold. Fact is, friend, you're getting old. HOPE YOU'RE REPAIRED SOON.
TO A SICK DRYER...
You burned a shirt, You charred the socks, You gave the folks electric shocks. A leaky hose, a missing screw, We hope that's all that's wrong with you.
R. Chast

about him in the pages of the local Hearst paper. It turned out that the perpetrator had been an inveterate reader of the *Times*, which had treated Gaynor somewhat more respectfully, but this seemed only to remind the Mayor that one local paper was as blackleg as another. Since the repainting, a second picture that has hung in Room 9 for generations has not yet been returned to its usual place above a nonworking marble fireplace, which serves as a spare filing space for Mark Mooney, the United Press International reporter who sits next to it. The missing picture is a framed copy of a photograph, famous in newspaper history, that shows Gaynor, spattered with blood, a moment after he was shot by the would-be assassin, as he stood near the rail of a ship about to sail for Europe. For local reporters, it has served as a kind of parable demonstrating that early-to-rise may get you nowhere in the newspaper business: the other photographers had done their work and left, but as a reward for being tardy the man from the *Evening World* got the historic picture of the Mayor just before he slumped to the deck. It was reported at the time that when Charles Chapin, the *Evening World's* city editor, saw the print he clutched it to his breast and cried happily, "Blood all over him—and exclusive, too!" Many of the city's chief executives, possibly including Mayor Koch, have no doubt seen this as typical of the solicitousness with which a mayor's misfortunes are greeted by the New York press.

Fiorello LaGuardia, the mayor whom Koch has often said he enjoys being compared with and whose portrait he has in his office, was another detester of the press. In the matter of the role they allow the City Hall press corps to play in their lives, however, the two could hardly be more different. Koch may meet with reporters seven or eight times a day. LaGuardia's news conferences, at their most frequent, were held only every few months. For these, he often required written questions, saying that was the only way reporters could get their thoughts together. When he met with them, he would lecture them on the ethics of their profession and accuse them of trying to sabotage his administration. In LaGuardia's last term, Richard Leahy, who is now a member of the City Council press office, and who sometimes covered the Mayor for the *World-Telegram*, recalls being warned that LaGuardia held only one press conference a year—on New Year's Day, which, of course, was hardly an occasion when reporters were eager to go down and do battle with the Mayor. For much of the Little Flower's twelve years in office, reporters were reduced to trying to waylay him on City Hall's front steps or on his arrival at the airport. On occasion, the only response a reporter would get was "You *dare* to want to talk to me?" The *Times* reporter Peter Kihss, who died a year ago, remembered a day when he, too, was working for the *World-Telegram* in the later LaGuardia years and approached the Mayor on the City Hall steps to ask about the rehiring of a former municipal employee. The Mayor's answer was "I'm going to throw you right down the steps." Kihss insisted that his readers deserved an answer. A moment later, "there was a sudden silence," Kihss recalled. "I realized I had seized the stocky little Mayor and lifted him right up into the air. I put him down—gently—and went quietly into Room 9." No matter how cavalierly members of the present City Hall press corps think they are being dealt with, the current mayor, who is six feet one and weighs some two hundred pounds, is not likely to receive similar treatment.

NO reporters now covering City Hall would trade their present privileges for those accorded the press under LaGuardia, but some of them have been startled by the increasing evidence that Koch is intent on trying to have them take the fall when something does not seem to be going well in the city—or when there is a sign that things are improving and he himself does something that makes them worse. Often, in recent years, it has seemed that just when the city's deep racial and ethnic divisions are beginning to heal, on occasion as the result of statesmanlike actions by the Mayor, he will suddenly make some remark that breaks the hostilities open again. At Koch's sixtieth-birthday celebration last year, at the Sheraton Centre—a fund-raiser which added a million and a half dollars to his campaign treasury—his media adviser, David Garth, had prepared a speech for him in which he spoke kindly of individuals with whom he had been on poor terms, including union leaders, and expressed the hope that in the coming years his administration would be "a friend of all the people of this city—blacks, Hispanics, whites, Asians." The conciliatory nature of the speech was something to be happy about even if it hadn't been somebody's birthday. Another recent hopeful development in the city had been meetings held between prominent black and Jewish leaders in an effort to achieve a rapprochement between the two groups, which had become badly alienated from each other. At a press conference a few hours before the birthday dinner, Koch, on being asked for a comment on the attempted reconciliation, denounced it as a cabal of New Yorkers bent on defeating him in the mayoral election—a charge that became the big political story the next morning. "Well, of course, I loved it, because I was speaking the truth and holding my opponents up to derision" was Koch's comment on the incident in "Politics," his new book, which came out this month. Early this year, asked at a press conference about his habit of making remarks that often had destructive results, the Mayor said that it was the fault of reporters, who should stop asking the kinds of questions to which, because of his responsibility to keep his constituents informed of his views, he had no choice but to give "counterproductive" and not "helpful" answers. The previous November, Koch spoke at a dinner of the Libel Defense Resource Center, an organization that is devoted to helping reporters and small newspapers faced with financially crippling libel suits—often those filed against them by public officials. The Mayor explained how he handled reporters he considered unduly critical of his administration. In one case, his response to a question was to respond "as sweetly" as he could that hardly anyone ever read the reporter's work. He did not sue publications for libel, the Mayor said, and that was welcome news to the Center members. Instead, when he thought he was wronged, "I speak out," Koch told them. "I give as good as I get. I've found that the best way to do this is to immediately set the facts straight." In a column in the *Times* a few weeks later, Anthony Lewis commended him for this position.

Four days after last month's general election, the headline over the editorial in the *Amsterdam News*, the city's most influential black paper, was "KOCH: A CRY OF LIBEL." The editorial said, "Ed Koch is angry, but that is not unusual. He is not, nor has he ever been, a happy man. He is angry at the pieces that appear in the *Amsterdam News* that do not sing his praises." Within the editorial was a letter from the Mayor accusing the paper of having libelled his administration in an October story that had reported complaints from some members of the city's Division of Real Property concerning what they saw as the undeserved promotion of a recently hired South African white woman as the department's senior planner for the Bronx. In the letter, the Mayor, still setting the facts straight, wrote that the paper had published other articles "tainted by racism and, on occasion, anti-Semitic." On the same editorial page there appeared a three-hundred-and-fifty-word statement by the Mayor commenting on a news story that had reported that South Africa was the source of substantial amounts of newsprint bought by the *Post*—which is the local daily that can be most heavily relied on to take a favorable view of the Koch City Hall. (The *Post's* policy of keeping up with the Mayor wherever he goes can have untoward results. Last April, when Koch went up to a Harlem church to deliver a sermon on Easter Sunday the *Post* was the only paper to send a reporter along, and thus the only publication to carry the news that, during his appearance, the Mayor, referring to his City Hall role, had told the congregation, "I believe that everything that happens on this earth is preordained by God, and I believe that, while it was the people who elected me, it was God that selected me." It was possibly another case of "Blood all over him—and exclusive, too! ") Of the charge against the *Post* regarding the South African newsprint, Koch said in his *Amsterdam News* statement that the *Post* had been "singled out by the media because of the enmity that some media people have towards the New York *Post*." Though the newsprint charges were the reason the Mayor gave for offering the statement, he devoted even more space to details of his own opposition to apartheid. With the communication from the Mayor had come a letter from William Rauch, his press secretary and the co-author of the Mayor's two books. The letter, which the *Amsterdam News* also printed on that editorial page, asked that the Mayor's statement be printed without any editing or cuts, and concluded, "If this very reasonable request is not honored, I respectfully submit to you that future requests to this office from the *Amsterdam News* will likewise not be honored." Beside the letter, the Harlem paper ran a cartoon that showed the Mayor facing reporters at the door of City Hall and telling them, "You have access to City Hall *if* you print what I want!" Accusing the Mayor of "feeling free to attempt to bully this small newspaper" and of "coming perilously close to negating freedom of the press," the *Amsterdam News* said, "We cannot imagine Mr. Rauch's writing such a letter demanding . . . space from the New York *Times*, the *Daily News*, or *Newsday*." Nevertheless, the *Amsterdam News* obediently published the statement just as prescribed in the Rauch letter. Thus, approximately half the printed space on its editorial page that week was supplied by the Mayor's office.

DURING the first week of this month, the Mayor handed around City Hall copies of "Politics," explaining to reporters, "History requires that you try to be honest." In the book, he calls David Rockefeller "stupid," Nelson Rockefeller "dopey," tells how much he dislikes former Representative Bella Abzug ("intensely, immensely"), and how he has attacked John Lindsay "unmercifully—always." He also gives a poor report of Herman Badillo, the first Puerto Rican to be elected to Congress and still the city's best-known Hispanic political figure. The two men had had a long conciliatory lunch just before the recent election, which had caused Badillo to believe that ethnic divisions in the city could be much improved in the Koch third term. In "Politics," Koch wrote that the city's Hispanics didn't like Badillo and thought he was arrogant, "that he left them when he moved from the Barrio to Riverdale, that he married two Jewish women, that he's no more Puerto Rican than I am." By that same week, the blame-the-press routine had become a steady drumbeat from the Mayor's end of City Hall. In late November, there had been discussion of a prospective increase in the transit fare. A year ago, the State Legislature extended a corporate tax surcharge with the understanding that the revenues it generated would hold the subway fare at ninety cents until January 1, 1986, when there would have to be an increase. The Mayor now announced at City Hall that if the state, in the special legislative session then under way in Albany, did not come up with money to save the ninety-cent fare he would hold the Governor solely responsible for the increase. When he was reminded that the Governor had said he had other priorities for the session, such as a program to build low-income housing in the city and a freeze on medical-malpractice insurance, the Mayor told reporters in an angry voice that rose almost to a shout, "That's outrageous! He should be able to do more than chew gum." On the first Monday of this month, the Mayor said at a press conference that he understood that Cuomo was very upset about the remark, and that it was all the fault of reporters who were trying to stir up trouble between him and the Governor. They should have pointed out in their stories, he told them, that he had made the comment "jocularly." (The Governor's press secretary, Martin Steadman, said that Cuomo hadn't had time to be upset, because "he's too busy practicing how to walk and chew gum." Not long afterward, however, the Governor suggested that if Koch was determined that the fare must be saved perhaps the city could use some of its half-billion-dollar budget surplus for that purpose.)

After the remark about jocularity, Joyce Purnick, the *Times's* bureau chief at City Hall, asked Koch what he would say to reporters who felt they could not write that the Mayor had said something jocularly when he plainly had not. In that case, said Koch, "they should be replaced" by their employers. That same day, he spent nearly half of an impromptu press conference attacking a Channel 5 reporter, whom he accused of having spent too much time on the plight of the homeless and not enough on what the city was doing for them. If reporters were dissatisfied, he said, they should make themselves responsible for seeing to it that homeless people got to the shelters. He attacked a WCBS reporter in a similar vein the next day and a WABC television reporter a few days later. In this cold season, the homeless are increasingly on New Yorkers' minds, and at times it has seemed that the Mayor sees them as among his adversaries, conspiring with other hostile forces in the press to tarnish his usual upbeat view of the good times he has brought the city. During a radio interview that week, he said that reporters were the most thin-skinned people he knew, and, discoursing on political columnists, said that writers who took up that profession were people who couldn't make it as politicians.

The same week, Koch handed out a three-page letter he had written to Robert Sales, the metropolitan editor of *Newsday*. On October 29th, Ken Gross, a veteran *Newsday* reporter, had begun his column, "New York Diary," with several paragraphs about "the deep humiliation, the vast social deprivation" of adults who cannot read. The thoughts had been occasioned by a ceremony he attended at the City University Graduate Center at which five students of four thousand enrolled in a free adult-literacy program were honored because they had made "particularly dramatic progress." It had been a media event, complete with television lights and several photographers present. The Mayor himself had handed out the certificates of achievement. He had then moved on to another event, while Gross stayed behind to talk privately to one of the honorees, chosen at random. "It is not easy to tell this part of the story," Gross wrote in a paragraph that began deep in the carryover of his story. He reported, without identifying the student in any way, that when the student was asked to read the certificate of achievement he could not do so. He could not read the press release or anything else put in front of him. The column concluded by saying that "no amount . . . of press agentry" would change the fact that the student honored for being able to read "could not read," and Gross added that this circumstance was a problem not only for the student but for all who learned of it. When the Mayor read the column, he fired off a letter to Gross's editor in which he described it as "one of the more reprehensible journalistic acts I have seen in my long public life." He insisted that the student had indeed been able to read, and that Gross had "attempted to humiliate . . . an individual and an entire program," which the Mayor described as "personally despicable and journalism at its worst." The Mayor's letter was almost as long as Gross's column. *Newsday*, standing by its reporter, declined to publish it. On December 4th, Koch distributed copies of his letter—though not of Gross's column—to members of the City Hall press corps, apparently in the hope that they would deal severely in print with their colleague. This did not happen. Still, the episode offered a warning to other reporters—particularly, perhaps, insecure young reporters—that they could risk being denounced as personally despicable if they cast doubt on the validity of any program with which the Mayor had publicly associated himself.

On Friday, December 6th, two days after Koch handed out the letter to *Newsday*, he presided over a bill-signing ceremony in which the intersection of Nassau, Broad, and Wall Streets, in lower Manhattan, was named John Peter Zenger Square. Three days later, he attended a ceremony in the rotunda of the State Supreme Court Building, in Foley Square, in celebration of the two-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the Zenger trial. Floyd Abrams, celebrated for his defense of newspapers and television networks in libel cases, presided over the event. Cuomo, busy in Albany, did not attend. Hemant S. Damle, a student at Manhattan's Stuyvesant High School, read a prize-winning essay on the Zenger case, which, he said, "established the adversarial relationship between journalism and government." The other speakers included Sol Wachtler, chief judge of the State Court of Appeals; Walter Cronkite, who read the plea that won Zenger's acquittal; and the Mayor. In his speech, Koch hailed the 1735 verdict in which "twelve average New Yorkers . . . rejected the proposition that the King could gag his critics," and described how he himself dealt with those who wrote "unfair, spiteful, or even maliciously false statements" about him or his policies. ("Even those newspapers that have consistently opposed me have given me the opportunity to rebut my critics in their pages," he said, thinking, perhaps, of the *Amsterdam News*.) Possibly to the surprise of some of those sitting with him in the rotunda, he then launched into a strong defense of trial jurors who have been handing out large damages "to punish what they regard as excesses of the press." Those who criticize the jurors, he said, are guilty of "elitist attitudes," since these average Americans are trying to encourage responsibility and self-discipline on the part of the press and "a more sensitive regard for personal reputation."

THERE was an upbeat item on the Mayor's official schedule on December 13th: a City Hall ceremony celebrating Seagram's donation to him of four hundred cases of wine and champagne for use at official city functions. Having opened a bottle of champagne, Koch—who has suggested that some of those in the city's shelters are homeless by choice and even, in some cases, intent on living it up at city expense—said, with a gleam in his eye, as he waved the champagne bottle, "I think this should be taken to the shelters." "KOCH POPS OUT CORK AND AWKWARD QUIP" was the *Times* headline the next day. The headline over the *Daily News* story, which pointed out that the lives of many of those in the shelters had fallen apart because of problems with alcohol, was "THE MAYOR POPS OFF AND A CONFLICT BUBBLES." This time, no one from the Mayor's office complained about reporters having failed to specify that he was speaking jocularly.

It is natural that politicians want to be written about accurately and that they hope for and cherish good press notices. When authorities went through the pockets of Abraham Lincoln after his assassination, they found that he had brought with him to Ford's Theatre nine clippings that reported well of him. The Seagram's champagne could have come in handy for another purpose that week: December 12th was the Mayor's sixty-first birthday. When a *Newsday* reporter asked him what presents he wanted, he listed several people, some of them from the press, whom he would like to have say something "nice" or "compassionate" about him. He wished also that Badillo would "turn the other cheek" and that Wilbert Tatum, the *Amsterdam News* editor, would "write one intellectually honest editorial." It is indeed possible to feel compassion for the Mayor, now widely referred to as the Seven Million Dollar Man, who has, all to himself, a big estate by the East River as well as a spare apartment off Washington Square, who is driven (or flown) anywhere in the city he wants to go, whose social and political dance card is crowded from morning to night, whose huge popularity has just been recertified at the polls, giving him more power than ever to change the city for the better—and who, as many commentators besides those at the *Amsterdam News* have noted, still does not seem to be a happy man. Instead of rejoicing in his good fortune and casting about for the wisest ways to put it to use, as he might do, he devotes much of his time, and that of his commissioners, administrators, and press assistants, to tireless efforts to discredit even the mildest suggestions that his administration might have failed in some respect—as any administration must from time to time. —ANDY LOGAN

• •

PRAYER TO OWL HIDING IN DAYLIGHT

Zealot in the trees, hot tiny speck
glowing in the dark of God's endless palm,
forgive me my absences! The clinically depressed
tenements of Bridgeport
ejected me into this calm, and now
there is too much rain, the leaves are pleading,
the green runs. All day, invisibly, you take notes,
like a businessman writing a novel
on his time off, a pale-blue spark
snapping between your ears.
When will you visit? We desire visitations
but lack discipline to call them
on, and only our best shoes are shining.
I want claw, want your gold
headlights, your roomy coat of feathers.
I want to sleep days and work nights,
praising silence in high branches.
I want the microtonics of steel
drained from my blood. Oh, the eclipse
has come and gone—show yourself.
You'll find my true love and me dreaming
on each other's shoulders, as the baby
breathes out tiny flowers in her crib
and the war continues, silently, elsewhere.

—JEFFREY SKINNER

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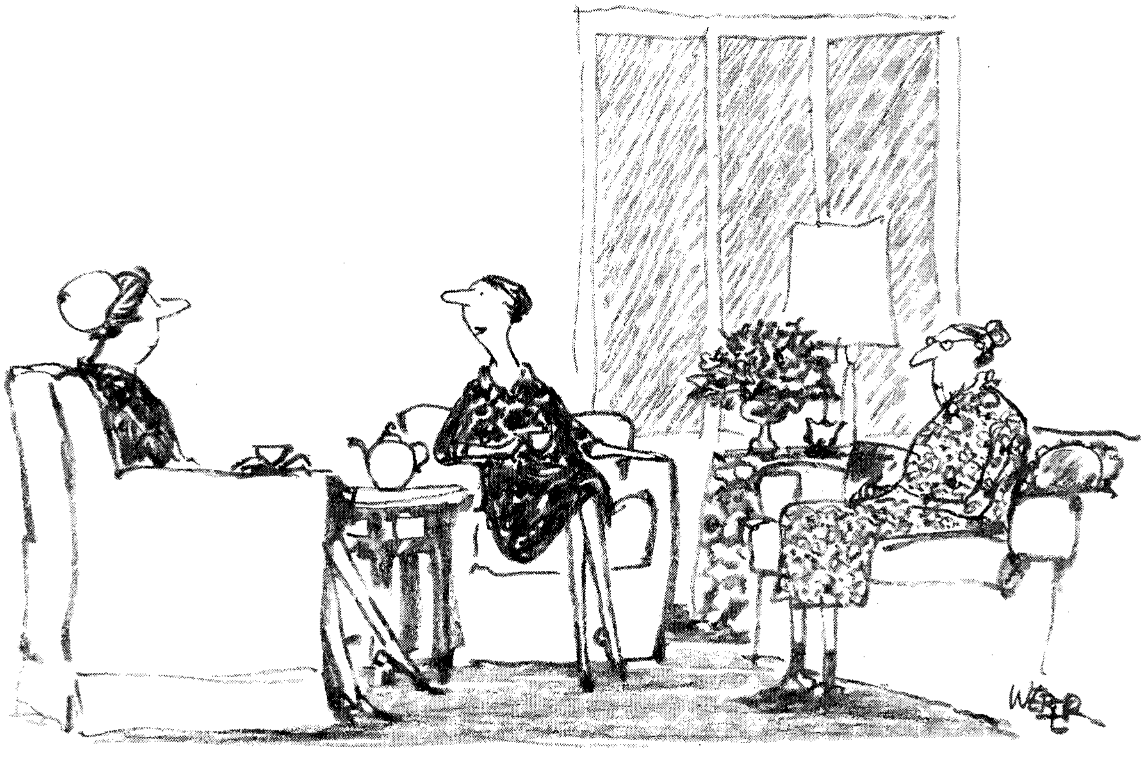
Sacred Monsters

“Out of Africa” dribbles on—adult, diligently cryptic, unsatisfying. This is a movie with a highborn heroine (played by Meryl Streep) who fights off a marauding lion with a whip, and somehow the scene isn’t tempestuous—it doesn’t give you a quiver. Possibly the director, Sydney Pollack, and his screenwriter, Kurt Luedtke, started out to tell a straightforward, reasonably accurate romantic adventure story and then became so ambivalent about their heroine, the Danish Karen Dinesen, and her big-game-hunter lover, Denys Finch Hatton (played by Robert Redford), who was the younger son of an earl, that they were no longer sure how to shape the footage. As the film presents her life, Karen, who is spurned by the cousin she loves, impulsively settles for his twin brother, Baron Bror von Blixen-Finecke; she sails to British East Africa in December, 1913, where she marries him. Although they had arranged to buy a dairy farm on the money her family provided, he has switched plans without consulting her, and they go off to start a coffee plantation. The Baron (played entertainingly by the sly-eyed Klaus Maria Brandauer) is a playboy and a rake; he leaves his bride to run the place, and infects her with syphilis besides. But the grandeur of Africa enraptures her; so do the twelve hundred Kikuyu and Somali who are her servants and field hands, and after her husband moves out, her lover uses her house as his home base between safaris. The movie telescopes the events of Karen Blixen’s eighteen years in Africa to roughly a decade, and tells us at the close that when she lost the farm she returned to Denmark and, using the pen name Isak Dinesen, wrote the works that made her famous (“Seven Gothic Tales,” published in 1934, and “Out of Africa,” in 1937).

The year just ending is the centenary of Dinesen’s birth, and you might expect the film’s theme to be what Africa meant to this woman and how it changed her into the author we know. But each time a situation calls for a dramatic clarification Pollack waffles and sidesteps. Does the Baron know that he has syphilis at the time he infects her? The scenes between them are so fuzzy we can’t tell. The movie doesn’t point up the fact that his putting her money into the farm was a fatal mistake—that she labored all those years to make a go of coffee in a region where it couldn’t be grown successfully. Issues much larger—central issues about the character of the principal figures—don’t fully emerge. As the movie has it, Karen virtually buys the Baron: she points out to him that he has run through his money and needs the bourgeois fortune she can bring him. And she’s indecently eager to call herself Baroness—she uses the title even before the marriage. Pollack appears to want us to see her as a bit goofy and pretentious but a strong-minded, wonderful woman. He hedges on what kind of woman she was. In her writing, she said of her Somali majordomo, the Muslim Farah (Malick Bowens), “The servant may be the more fascinating of the two, still it holds true of him as of his master that his play of colours would fade and his timbre abate, were he to stand alone. He needs a master in order to be himself.” Pollack doesn’t sort out his feelings about this woman who wrote that “Farah was my servant by the grace of God.” He doesn’t include the high-strung, hysterical side of her character that some of her contemporaries described, and her love affair with Finch Hatton, which was possibly platonic, is presented as physical. But it’s apparent that the young Baroness finds fulfillment in the role of patrician. She plays white goddess, and Denys is in the ivory trade; even the Baron is a hunter and safari leader. The movie wriggles around trying to make these people morally acceptable to a modern audience. (An example: when Karen and Denys are on safari together, they don’t shoot the two lions they see until the beasts spring at them.)

Part of the problem that Pollack has in showing us how Africa formed Karen Blixen as a writer is the kind of writer she became. Her baroque stories are lacquered words and phrases and no insides. Some seem meant to be morality tales, but you never get the moral. And the supernatural effects in them aren’t connected to any spirituality—they’re a display of literary armature, of skill. As author, she’s the teller of the tale; nothing is presented more passionately than anything else—she seems to refuse to draw from her own experience. (And you end up



“*Mother’s finest quality is her willingness to forgive.*”

with a Meryl Streep.) In the movie, after leisurely dinners Denys starts the Baroness on a story by giving her a first sentence, and she takes off from it, charming him and his affable, gregarious business partner, Berkeley (Michael Kitchen), by spinning her fantasy through the indolent night and into the dawn. It's a mandarin form of Trivial Pursuit. And, like these spun-out stories, her "Seven Gothic Tales" are a form of distraction; they read as if she had devised them in the fevered atmosphere of all-night debauches (although actually she'd been working on them since her girlhood, and a bit of mold clung to them). It's awkward when Redford as Denys gives Karen a pen and tells her to write down her stories; his gesture and his words stick out—you can feel that the movie is reaching for a theme and trying to give him a function in making her a writer. (Actually, Karen Dinesen had published stories, in Danish, as early as 1907.) Onscreen (as in fact), the stories Karen confects to please him are told in her delicately accented English, and Isak Dinesen wrote her "Gothic Tales" in English. This may have been a way of keeping Denys and the long nights of storytelling alive in her memory; it had a practical purpose, too, for a woman who hoped to earn a living.

"Out of Africa" was also written in English, but she was no longer playing Scheherazade. A memoir of her years in Kenya, of the tribesmen and the farming, the book has a sovereign plainness; it's lordly, but it's magnificent, too. Nothing in the movie suggests the directness and power of Dinesen's writing in "Out of Africa." I wish that the anecdotes in the book didn't so often exalt her; I wish that she weren't so determined to be her own heroine. But she is a real writer, and though her love for the Africans appears to be inextricably tied to her seeing herself as the master, the love rings true.

Meryl Streep has used too many foreign accents on us, and this new one gives her utterances an archness, a formality—it puts quotation marks around everything she says. Still, she's animated in the early scenes; she's amusing when she acts ditsy, and she has some oddly affecting moments. Her character doesn't deepen, though, or come to mean more to us, and Redford doesn't give out with anything for her to play against. So she pulls back—the energy goes out of her performance—and they both spend a lot of time displaying their profiles. Redford carries his sunny aura from picture to picture; when he first shows up, you look for his baseball bat. The two best-known things about the dashing aristocrat Denys Finch Hatton are that he was British and that he was bald. (He wore a wide array of hats.) Redford is as American as ever, and his fluffy hair is a golden dream. He speaks his lines crisply, but he seems adrift, lost in another movie, and Pollack treats him with unseemly reverence. His role is a series of grand entrances and lingering exits. Pollack must be trying to set up a glorious doomed romance in an exotic setting, but when Streep and Redford are on safari, drinking wine out of crystal goblets and dancing on the earth between two campfires, or when they're in the wilds and he's shampooing her hair, or even when they head for a jungle tent and everything is primed for passion, they seem too absorbed in themselves to notice each other. At times, Streep looks waxy and abstracted in the manner of forties movie stars—it's as if she were wearing a facial mask—and Redford, playing another of his elusive, detached heroes, looks as if he'd been blow-dried away. When Karen suddenly becomes demanding and explodes at Denys—she wants him to marry her—it's as if a couple of pages from a bad novel about a possessive woman had been pasted into the middle of a *National Geographic* photo essay.

This is "classical" big-star narrative moviemaking, but without the logic, the easy-to-read surface, and the sureness that contribute to the pleasure of that kind of picture. A scene during the First World War in which Karen is told that the women and children can't be protected on the farms and must move into town has no follow-through. And when the Baron, who's fighting with the British forces, sends a message to his wife to arrange for supplies to be delivered to them, and she takes them herself, leading an oxen-drawn transport across a sizable chunk of Africa, we aren't cued to know why she has done it, or whether, after she arrives and the Army men stare at her, her husband is proud or aghast. The movie hums a little when Brandauer or Michael Kitchen or Suzanna Hamilton (as the young equestrienne Felicity) is on the screen; they're recognizably human. And several of the black performers are great subjects for David Watkin's camera—Malick Bowens, with his faraway eyes, in particular. There's the occasional stunning moment, such as the night scene of the victorious troops returning from the war, the proud black soldiers holding up torches as they march. Sydney Pollack packed the picture with historical verisimilitude, but it seems to be about something nebulous; he failed to give the two main characters and the story an independent existence. I think he picked the wrong woman writer to make a movie about; he must have been haunted by the familiar image of the aged Isak Dinesen—the bony, syphilitic high priestess who looked as if she were holding out a vial of poison. His work here exudes uncertainty.

DURING the making of "The Color Purple," Steven Spielberg's version of the Alice Walker novel about black women's lives in the South in the first half of the century, the advance publicity suggested that he was attempting something "serious." But when you see the movie you realize that he was probably attracted by Walker's childlike heroine, Celie, and the book's lyrical presentation of the healing power of love. He may not have understood this, because he approaches the material with undue timidity. It's no wonder the novel was popular. On the first page, the fourteen-year-old black drudge Celie is raped by the man she believes to be her father. She gives birth to two children by this brute; he takes the babies away, and she has no idea what he has done with them. Tired of her, he forces her to marry another brute—a widowed farmer who needs her to take care of his children. This man uses her sexually and beats her. When her younger sister, Nettie—the only person who cares for her and doesn't think she's ugly—runs away from the raping father and comes to stay with her, her husband makes advances to Nettie and, when Nettie fights him, throws her off the property. Poor Celie toils on, with never a kind word coming her way, until her husband brings home Shug Avery, a honky-tonk singer—his true love and sometime mistress—who is sick and needs care. Celie falls in love with the raucous, gutsy Shug (short for "sugar"), and Shug, seeing Celie's true worth, makes love to her. It's the turning point of Celie's life: after experiencing sexual pleasure, she becomes confident of her self-worth, goes out into the world, and returns to make a success of herself running a small business.

But "The Color Purple" isn't just the story of Celie; it's an extended-family saga spanning generations and two continents. (The cast-out Nettie has gone to Africa, with a missionary couple.) The novel is about the bonding of the generous, artistically gifted, understanding black women (no matter how worn down they are, they never speak a harsh word to a child). It's also about the insensitivity, cowardice, and meanness of the black men (Nettie is able to brief us on how the men oppress the women in Africa, too). The glue that holds it all together is a pop-folk religiosity that also serves to keep the book's anti-male attitudes in check. Walker allows some of the lazy, lecherous oppressors to redeem themselves by accepting their inferiority to their wives and developing their aptitudes for cooking and sewing. So the many characters all come together for a series of reconciliation scenes.

Probably Alice Walker gets by with so much rampant female chauvinism because it's put in the mouth of her battered fourteen-year-old heroine. The book—or, rather, the best part of it, roughly the first third—is made up of Celie's letters to God, which are written in a raw, cadenced dialect, an artful version of a rural near-illiterate's black English. The book has a joyous emotional swing to it, and this swing can carry a reader right through inspirational passages such as the one where Shug teaches Celie that God is inside her and inside everybody else, that everything wants to be loved and "it pisses God off if you walk by the color purple in a field somewhere and don't notice it."

Spielberg has been quoted in the *Times* as being worried about "doing a movie about *people* for the first time in my career," and fearing that he'll be "accused of not having the sensibility to do character studies." But the Walker material has about as much to do with character studies as Disney's "Song of the South" did. Spielberg's "The Color Purple" is probably the least authentic in feeling of any of his full-length films; the people on the screen are like characters operated by Frank Oz. But they're not much phonier than the people in the book: Spielberg's problem is that he can't give the material the emotional push of that earthy folk style of Walker's. He just doesn't have the conviction that she has.

Spielberg's version comes from a man who filters everything through movies. He sees Georgia in 1909 the way a European director might; visually, the picture suggests "Song of the South" remade by Visconti. When Celie (played in the early scenes by Desreta Jackson and then by Whoopi Goldberg) and Nettie (Akosua Busia) do their jive talk—clapping their hands in fast, intricate rhythms as they chant—it seems to be going on in a faraway, magical kingdom, in a field of pink flowers from the florists who supplied the daffodils for David Lean's "Doctor Zhivago." Spielberg has all this facile, pretty camera technique, but he can't find an appropriate tone, and so the incidents don't click into place. The movie is muffled, bombed out, and a gooey score by Quincy Jones calls attention to the emotional void—Jones seems to have been waiting all his life to metamorphose into Max Steiner.

Spielberg soft-pedals the lesbian side of the Celie and Shug romance, and the men may be more buffoonish than they are in the book and so less threatening, but he has tried to be faithful to Walker. This doesn't do the movie a lot of good. Working from a script (by Menno Meyjes) that hasn't reshaped the novel into a dramatic structure, Spielberg has trouble getting about two dozen characters in and out of the action, which spans some thirty years. (Performances, such as Rae Dawn Chong's as Squeak—Celie's stepson's mistress, who wants to be a singer—have obviously been truncated.) A scene of several women standing on Celie's porch is the worst piece of staging this director ever dreamed up. It tops even the crowd scene where the people singing outside a church converge with the people singing inside—a jubilee that reminds you of fire drills in junior high. And this is the only film that Spielberg has ever made where the editing looks to be from desperation. The crosscutting between Nettie's experiences in Africa and Celie's life back home is staggeringly ineffective. In one sequence, we hop back and forth between Celie, who has just learned of her husband's full treachery to her and picks up a straight razor to shave him, and Shug, who is at a distance and starts running

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to the house because she intuits that Celie is about to cut his throat, and Nettie in Africa dashing to a ritual of initiation where children are to have their faces incised. The passage rivals the famous parody of editing in "The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz," where Denholm Elliott played a drunken filmmaker who, having been hired by a father to record his son's bar mitzvah, got carried away with his art and intercut the gathering with bloody primitive rites. (Spielberg's African ritual may even be a first on film: a coed tribal initiation.)

Except for the dimpled Oprah Winfrey as the powerhouse Sofia, whose mighty punch at a white man lands her in jail for twelve years, the performers don't make a very strong impression. Whoopi Goldberg's Celie may be a little less "real" than the title character in "E.T.," but, given the conception of Celie—who has to be meek and then discover her power—she does a respectable job. (If we feel a letdown when she takes over from Desreta Jackson's teen-age Celie, it's because Jackson is warmer and more open to the camera.) Willard Pugh is likable and peppy as Celie's stepson, who keeps falling through roofs, and Danny Glover, in the difficult role of the husband who slaps her around, probably does as well as anybody could with material such as the stupid comedy routine where he proves the ineptness of men by trying to prepare a meal for the bedridden Shug and burning everything. (It's the kind of humiliation that Katharine Hepburn went through long ago in "Woman of the Year;" it's no less offensive when the sexual tables are turned.) As Shug, Margaret Avery is in a tough spot, because of all the press attention to Tina Turner's being offered the role and turning it down. (You can't help imagining how Turner might have played it.) Margaret Avery makes a terrific entrance, grinning, with a jagged front tooth sticking out, and she looks great singing in a glittering red dress in a juke joint. (She's dubbed by Tata Vega.) But then an awful thing happens, which has to be at least partly the director's fault: she plays the rest of her scenes in a refined, contemporary manner that dulls out all interest in Shug. If you're among the millions of people who have read the book, you probably expect the actors to be more important than they turn out to be. The movie is amorphous; it's a pastoral about the triumph of the human spirit, and it blurs on you.

PROBABLY everyone will agree that the subject of a movie should not place it beyond criticism. Still, Claude Lanzmann's nine-hour-and-twenty-three-minute documentary epic, "Shoah," which is made up of interviews with people who have knowledge of the Nazi extermination centers—whether as slave laborers, railroad workers, technicians, bureaucrats, or just onlookers—may seem a special case. I ask the forbearance of readers for a dissenting view of a film that is widely regarded as a masterpiece. I found "Shoah" logy and exhausting right from the start, and when it had been going on for an hour or longer I was squirming restlessly, my attention slackening. Then Filip Müller, a survivor of the Auschwitz "special detail," began to talk. A sturdy Czech in a white shirt, he has a simple, unforced dramatic power as he describes how in 1942, as a boy of twenty, he was sent, along with a group of other Jewish prisoners, to work in the incineration chamber of the crematorium in Camp 1 at Auschwitz. His job was to undress the corpses, then to feed the ovens and stir the bodies. Müller speaks with urgency in a beautiful, light voice; he's a fluent storyteller, who sets his own rhythms and brings out the progression of his experiences. But when Lanzmann, who does all the questioning himself, moves on, the film once again becomes discursive; we watch him putting pressure on people—pouncing on a detail here or there—and we register the silences, the hesitancies, the breakdowns. Despite the fine, painful moments, such as Müller's testimony, in Part I (four hours and thirty-three minutes), and the account of starvation in the Warsaw ghetto given by Jan Karski, who was a courier for the Polish government-in-exile, in Part II (four hours and fifty minutes), sitting in a theatre seat for a film as full of dead spaces as this one seems to me a form of self-punishment. A large proportion of the audience may agree: Part I plays in a crowded theatre; only a handful of people attend Part II.

The focus of Lanzmann's inquiry isn't the concentration camps; it's the death factories, which were set up in rural areas of Poland (sometimes in conjunction with work camps). Lanzmann speaks French, German, and English, but he doesn't speak Polish, and so for much of the time he asks questions in French and a woman translator puts them into Polish; the subject replies in Polish and the translator puts the answers into French for Lanzmann while we read the English subtitles. (A translator is also required when those interviewed speak Hebrew or Yiddish.) This method of questioning inflates the scale of the film. The theme is, of course, infinitely large, but Lanzmann's method gives the filmmaking itself a deadening weight and solemnity. "Shoah"—the word is Hebrew for "annihilation"—is oral history treated on a grand scale as an elegy or meditation. Lanzmann has taken the Holocaust as his art work, and he aestheticizes everything for us. The text of the film—" 'Shoah': An Oral History of the Holocaust," published by Pantheon Books—runs less than two hundred pages. He slows down this material, stretching it almost languorously. While the subjects speak, the camera stays on them for very long takes; at first, the faces may be fascinating, but then nothing more is revealed to us and the camera is still on them. Eventually, it moves, and during the questions and answers it scans the peaceful, vernal countryside where the ovens used to belch smoke in Chelmno, Treblinka, Auschwitz, Belzec, and other places. The landscapes are used as a poetic visual accompaniment to the spoken words, and the camera keeps circling back to the railroad tracks and ramps and platforms that marked the end of the line—the arrival at the camps. The long camera movements are repeated ritualistically. We hear the rolling of heavily loaded boxcars, and, with the camera mounted on the front of the train, we're in the position of someone entering the death compounds, over and over.

"Shoah" presents itself as art, and Lanzmann, who demands that it be considered as such, has said that it contains not one unnecessary frame, yet there's also an element of moral blackmail in his approach. It's as if he were saying, "I spent eleven years of my life scrounging for money and hunting down survivors in fourteen countries. I shot three hundred and fifty hours of footage on the subject of genocide, and you can't curb your impatience for a few hours?" But, to put it plainly, not everyone who has the dedication to make a film on a great theme is a great moviemaker. Lanzmann's techniques are often crude: when he wants us to know that the authority he's talking to—the American historian Raul Hilberg, author of "The Destruction of the European Jews"—is saying something especially cogent, he moves the camera in and shows us Hilberg's eyes, nose, and mouth in giant closeup. In Part II, Hilberg, who talks in slow, imposing rhythms, quotes a small joke that the Warsaw diarist Adam Czerniakow wrote down, and Lanzmann has him explain it and explain it again. Lanzmann's closeups can be tyrannically close—invasions of a face—and they're frequently followed by wandering longshots. The camera sweeps around the interior of a booming German café, and an elderly (rather macabre) couple dance endlessly. The scene serves only a moralizing purpose: Think what this prosperity is built on! In Part II, when the landscapes of Part I are replaced by visual tours of New York City, Washington, D.C., and the Ruhr, the message appears to be: See, all this goes on as if nothing happened! And there are times when Lanzmann loiters over scenes that have practically no content: at one point, he drives through city streets in his red-and-white van, and we have to watch him park, jockeying into the space. When the film cuts to the video equipment inside the van, we spend time looking at the broad back of one of his assistants. The film lags: it's as if there were white space between the frames—you feel as if someone had thrown a big carpet over you. As it happens, the assistant in the van is watching a video monitor while Lanzmann conducts a surreptitiously photographed interview—one of his more compelling interviews, a talk with a former S.S. man, who delivers a precise, detailed report on how Treblinka operated at full capacity when the Warsaw ghetto was being emptied. But in general Lanzmann is not a stirring interviewer. You don't feel the play of a wide-ranging intelligence in his questioning, and when he prods the Jewish survivors into talking about things they don't want to talk about, you don't have the feeling that he's getting fresh perceptions from them.

A journalist, Lanzmann, who was born in Paris in 1925 and began working at *Les Temps Modernes*, with Sartre and de Beauvoir, in 1952, has made one other film, "Why Israel?"—a documentary completed in 1972. Though he took a doctor's degree in philosophy, he works like a detective (and sometimes a prosecutor) rather than a philosopher. "Shoah" has nothing resembling the moral questions raised in Marcel Ophuls' "The Sorrow and the Pity" (which is about the reactions of the French to the Nazi Occupation). Lanzmann sets out to document how the virtual annihilation of European Jewry was accomplished: he goes after the minutiae of the railway schedules, the exact number of people who died of thirst and disease on the trips in the sealed cars, the details of how they were stripped, the types of gas used, the capacity of the centers (how many people could be processed), just how long it took from the time the people arrived on the trains to the disposal of their ashes in the nearest river (best time: two hours), and so on. "Shoah" is certainly a vivid presentation of the nuts and bolts—and the hideousness—of genocide. But many questions that come to a viewer's mind are left unanswered. We spend a long time with the Jewish survivors whose youth was spent working in and around the ovens, yet the interviews are conducted in impersonal settings, so we don't find out what sort of lives these men managed to make for themselves afterward. And although Jan Karski—tense, tortured by his memories—explains that the Jewish leaders asked him to take their plans of how the slaughter could be stopped to officials of the Allied governments, we don't learn how far he got or what the responses were.

The film's slackness isn't the only reason you may feel restless; there's a deeper reason. When you come out of "The Sorrow and the Pity," there has been so much packed into its four hours and twenty minutes—so many widely differing instances of collaboration and resistance, and such a steady accumulation of perspectives—that your mind is buzzing. All the circuits are busy—something that rarely happens at a movie. It's a genuinely challenging experience, a tonic. "Shoah" doesn't set you to thinking. When you come out, you're likely to feel dazed, and confirmed in all your worst fears. It's not just the exact procedures used in the extermination process that Lanzmann is hunting down. He's after the Gentiles' attitudes toward the process. "Shoah" presents a world in which a Gentile rarely shows any human feeling toward a Jew. The Polish peasants who saw Jewish children being thrown into vans by their feet don't seem to have been upset, or even touched. The former S.S. officer describes the operation of the ovens in terms of the efficiency and the technical accomplishments of the S.S. A German woman, the wife of a Nazi schoolteacher in Chelmno, where four hundred thousand Jews were killed (and two survived), talks about the frightful screams—how depressing they were, day after day—while we look at her pinched face. (She's like an elderly woman in an Edvard Munch painting.) I think we're meant to feel her dissociation from the people screaming, feel the indifference behind her calling it "sad, sad, sad." When she rattles on about how primitive the town's toilet facilities used to be, she shows more involvement, and that has to be the reason this chatter of hers is included.

Lanzmann succeeds in making the past and the present seem one, and this appears to be an aesthetic victory—the result of that circling camera, and of the death-factory survivors, with their memories. It has another aspect, though: implicitly, the film says that the past and the present *are* one—that this horror could happen again. See, the Polish peasants are still talking about how the Jews killed Christ and hoarded gold. They saw the smoke from the ovens—the death centers were in fields adjoining their farms—and they think the Jews deserved to burn.

The way the evidence is presented in this movie, you can't keep from passing judgment, and it's almost always facile judgment against the Gentiles—even those who were powerless. The survivors of the extermination centers explain that most of the work—cutting off the victims' hair, cleaning the gas chambers, stoking the furnaces—was done by Jews assigned to "special details" and then killed. (The Nazis didn't want to leave any witnesses.) The few Jewish workers who survived did so through rare, unpredictable circumstances, such as recovering after being shot in the head. Suppose these workers had been Gentile slave laborers, and as bewildered and terrified as the Jews. Would Lanzmann have treated survivors among them with the loving respect he shows the Jewish survivors? Or would he have been eager to seize on signs of ignorance and prejudice among them—as eager as he is with the other Gentiles here?

The film is diffuse, but Lanzmann

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is blunt-minded: he's out to indict the callous. If you were to set him loose, he could probably find anti-Semitism anywhere. Maybe any of us could if we looked for it, but he looked in special places, and it's shocking to see the unself-conscious forms of it that he turned up among people who lived close enough to the death centers to smell the stench. Of course, he's not very fussy about his subjects: in some passages he seems to be conducting his interviews at Woody Allen's convention of village idiots. But even if you accept his examples as valid and representative, what doesn't seem valid is the significance that the film confers on them. Lanzmann's dominant visual metaphor—putting you on the trains that keep rumbling toward the extermination factories—isn't just saying "Never forget!" The heart of his obsession appears to be to show you that the Gentiles will do it to the Jews again if they get a chance.

"Shoah" is a long moan. It's saying, "We've always been oppressed, and we'll be oppressed again." This is implicit in the mood of the film—in the claustrophobic inevitability of the trains moving toward the ovens. Lanzmann explained to the *Times*, "It is all on the theme of anti-Semitism, but each time it is picked up at another level," and the whole film can be seen as a Jew's pointing a finger at the Gentile world and crying, "You lowlifes—you want to kill us!" This is not necessarily an aberrant or irrational notion, and a moan is not an inappropriate response to the history of the Jews. But the lack of moral complexity in Lanzmann's approach keeps the film from being a great moan. When you're watching the Ophuls picture, your perspective expands: you keep changing your mind, and you can see that he's changing his, too. You don't just become self-righteous about gloating, mean-spirited peasants and unfeeling Nazi bureaucrats.

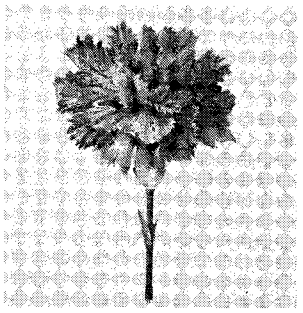
"Shoah" accumulates data compulsively; you learn more and more about the railway schedules, but your vision becomes narrower. The film is exhausting to watch because it closes your mind. —PAULINE KAEL

•

Sen. Dan Quayle of Indiana says he would like to phase out the honey support program. Brose McVey, a Quayle aide, said the honey phase-out would be "a symbolic jester to show that some of these programs have outlived their usefulness."

—*American Bee Journal.*

No jokes, please.



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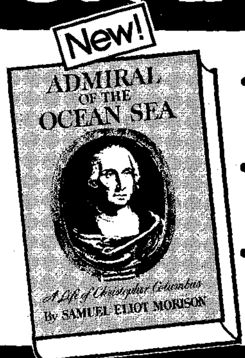

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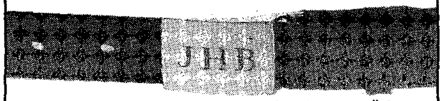

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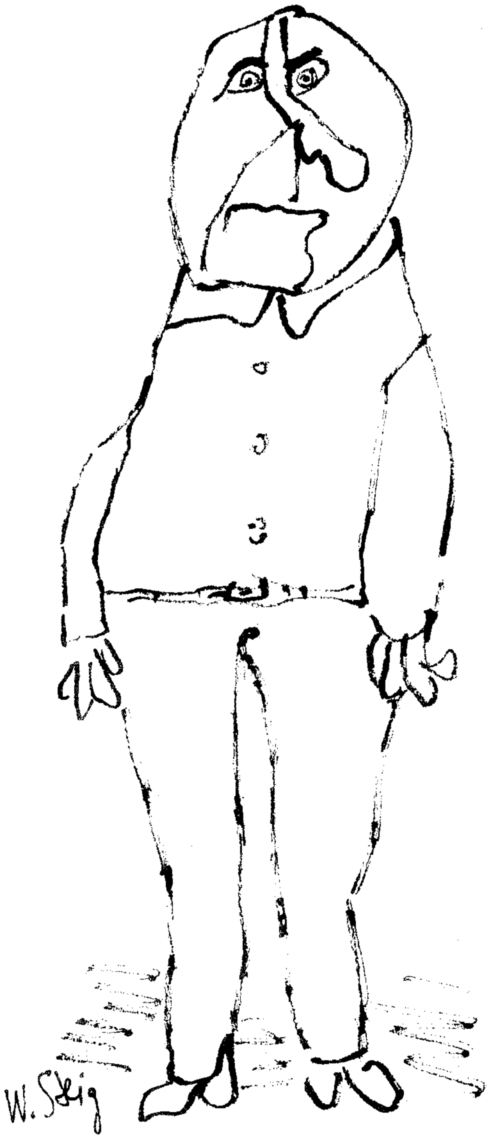
MUSICAL EVENTS

Tuneful Choirs

THE New Amsterdam Singers, conducted by Clara Longstreth, gave two performances this month of a wide-ranging Heinrich Schütz program; it included many of Schütz's better-known compositions, from the madrigal "Dunque addio" of Opus 1 to the big German Magnificat of the "Swansong" collection. The first concert was sung in Immanuel Lutheran Church, the second (the one I heard, on Sunday afternoon last week) in St. Ignatius, on West Eighty-seventh Street—a 1902 Episcopal church by Charles Haight, lofty, Gothic, and interestingly shaped (a Latin cross ingeniously condensed onto a rectangular site), where Mass is chanted partly in Latin. The chorus is sixty strong. A semichorus of nineteen emerged from it to sing the smaller compositions. Two violins, a cello, and organ provided instrumental parts. The church was packed.

The chorus has good intonation. The balance was excellent. And the rhythmic mazes of such a piece as the six-part "Ich bin eine rufende Stimme" (John the Baptist's "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness") were surely trod. But right from the start—as the choir sang "Cantate domino canticum novum" without clearly struck "c"s, "t"s, and "d"—there was something missing: a strong response to the sound and shape of words. Miss Longstreth's admirable program notes referred often to the vividness of Schütz's text settings. She pointed out that in the Lord's Prayer he declaimed "Give us this day our daily bread" in a way to suggest petition by people who, during the Thirty Years War, had known famine. And her singers plainly understood what they were singing about. In "Ad dominum cum tribularer" they voiced the sobbing semitone descents of the phrase eloquently. But they didn't use the four consonant attacks and the four vowel colors of "tribularer" to make vivid the phrase. In fact, their declamation was sometimes so mealy—lips and tongues so lazy—that even as one followed the texts in the program book it was hard to know which line had been reached. It's no good singing in Latin and in German if one doesn't use the sounds of those languages for communication. (Perhaps in this country Schütz should be sung in English; he himself gave precedent for translation, in many pieces that have come down to us with both Latin and vernacular texts.) Words were mushed for the maintenance of full, "rounded," agreeable tone. I wish Miss Longstreth had urged her chorus to use harder, brighter, more forward sound, and her sopranos to emulate boys with open, uncovered timbre. When Schütz's lines broke, as often they do, into eighth-note exuberance, the riffs were not revelled in. This is a good choir, and it does adventurous programs. It was an enjoyable concert. A sharper dramatic focus on the text of each piece would have made it more enjoyable still.

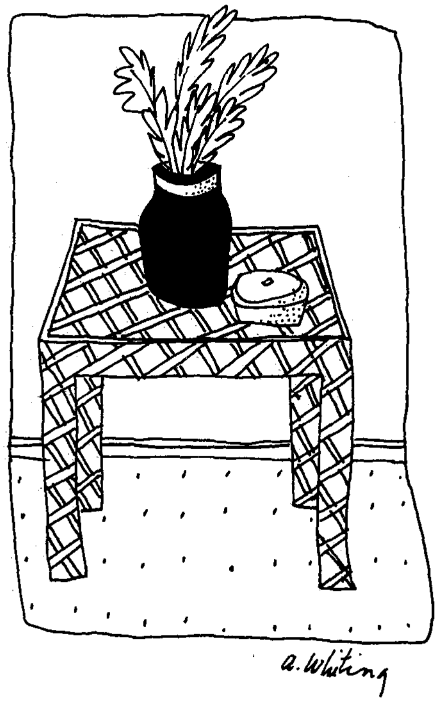


Man with His Nose Out of Joint

NEW YORK'S Sunday-afternoon church concerts are a reason for not leaving the city at weekends. On the last Sunday of November, the Classical Quartet and the oboist Stephen Hammer were playing Haydn, Mozart, Boccherini, and Beethoven in Corpus Christi's Music Before 1800 series. Only something very special could induce one to miss that, and something there was: in Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, Pomerium Musices (fourteen singers, including their director, Alexander Blachly), the New York Consort of Viols (four players, including their director, Judith Davidoff), and the harpsichordist Charles Sherman joined in a program of music from sixteenth-century Naples. It was not all sacred. It included a setting by Lodovico Agostini (made long after the event) of the canzona that welcomed Lucrezia Borgia to Naples as the bride of Alfonso of Aragon, madrigals, villanescas, and dances. The performers, solo and in varying ensemble combinations, presented a captivating picture of the musics that flourished in the restless, excitable city. The Spaniard Diego Ortiz and the Fleming Giovanni de Macque were directors of the viceregal cappella; the latter, at the close of the century, increased the musical forces until they rivalled those of St. Mark's in Venice. Naples was also a center of keyboard activity. In Gesualdo, sixty miles to the east, the Prince of Venosa, whose father had been served by Macque and by Pomponio Nenna, devoted himself to composition. At this concert, music by all these men and several others was performed with rapt, eager artistry. Gesualdo's "Ave, dulcissima Maria" made a wonderful close. Stravinsky, writing in a preface to Glenn Watkins' book about Gesualdo, feared that modern singers, busied in a breadwinning round of taping commercials and "disposing of seasonal oratorios," had no time to "achieve the blends, the exactness of intonation, the diction and articulation that the Prince's singers would have had to master." But the Pomerium singers were masterly.

"JUDAS MACCABAEUS" is a Chanukkah oratorio: in Act III, the Feast of Lights, inaugurated to celebrate Judas's victory over the Syrians, is solemnized. (The saga of the Maccabee brothers was continued in Handel's next oratorio, "Alexander Balus," which had what may have been its American première in Washington last year.) Handel wrote the work to celebrate the Duke of Cumberland's defeat of the Young Pretender, at the Battle of Culloden. It's an oratorio that has long been popular. Hermann Abert, Mozart's biographer, praised its depiction of a military leader "who performed famous deeds thanks to his own great heart and strong arm, as only Germany's chivalry has done," and thought that Handel intended a "subtle criticism of the British character." (Later, in Nazi Germany, the libretto was recast as "Wilhelm von Nassau.") The action is all offstage. The mood alternates between dismay and jubilation, and the sad pieces are the more stirring: the magnificent choruses of mourning for Mattathias—Judas, Simon, and Jonathan's heroic father—at the start; the despairing "Ah! wretched, wretched Israel!," for cello, soprano, and chorus, in Act II. Jonathan Keates, in his "Handel: The Man and His Music" (St. Martin's)—an enthusiastic "layman" study combining attention to recent research with discerning personal appraisals—defends "Judas" and its enduring popularity, despite the "occasionally rather coarse appeal to communal sentiment": the "very absence of local, individualized drama" leads to the "universal expressions of happiness, freedom and religious devotion."

Two Chanukkah performances of the oratorio were given at the 92nd Street Y by the Y Chorale and the Y Chamber Symphony, conducted by Gerard Schwarz. (I heard the second.) The chorus, thirty strong, trained by Amy Kaiser, was first-rate—firm tone, clear words, energetic delivery, expressive phrasing—and in "Sing unto God" it produced coloratura of startling distinctness and brilliance. Benita Valente, as the Israelitish Woman, and André Emelianoff, the solo cellist, were eloquent in "Ah! wretched, wretched Israel!" Kristina Carlson was the Israelitish Man (her New York début). This is the role in which Caterina Galli, at the first "Judas," in 1747, made her name and, as Burney reports, "became an important personage among singers." She specialized in breeches parts; Handel went on to write Alexander Balus and Solomon for her. (She lived on into the nineteenth century, and made some Covent Garden appearances in her mid-seventies.) Today, with increasing frequency, countertenors take over these transvestite roles. Miss Carlson struck no convincing blow for restoring them to her sex: her ample voice was often untidy, not finely and keenly focussed; her words were not beautifully pronounced. But Burney's phrase for Galli "there was something spirited and interesting in her manner" could be applied to a few passages where Miss Carlson dug arrestingly into chest voice. Rockwell Blake's Judas was fluent but unattractive in timbre. Jan Opalach, as Simon, was poised, polished, and vigorous. His bold, clear divisions in "The Lord worketh wonders" lent animation to an undistinguished bravura aria. (A week later, he could be heard as a rather impressive baritone soloist in Vaughan Williams' "Sea Symphony"—a St. Louis performance, spaciously conducted by Leonard Slatkin, broadcast by WNYC.) But he must conquer a tendency toward what Plunket Greene (in "Interpretation in Song") calls "clergyman's" English—the plummy delivery that "converts the manly English pronunciation of 'God' into a compromise between 'Guard' and 'Gurd' " and begins "Paradise Lost" as "Arv mahn's farst desorbairdyurnce ahnd tha frurt." Mr. Schwarz's rhythms were sometimes alert, sometimes a bit ploddy. After each number, and even between each recitative and its ensuant aria or ensemble, he made a long, awkward pause (while the chorus rose or sat and the soloists shifted their stations). This had an unhappy effect on the sweep and surge of Handel's long sequences.



THE next day, I went to the first of Musica Sacra's two Advent "Messiah"s, conducted by Richard Westenburg, in Avery Fisher Hall. This was very differently paced: close-knit, with crunched recitative cadences acting as springboards into aria or chorus. There were no holes, but there was no hustle, either; it was a balanced, beautifully shaped and proportioned account of the work. Charles Jennens, who compiled the text for Handel, called "Messiah" a "fine Entertainment," and its early London performances were given—many considered this scandalous—in theatres. Of course, it's also a sublime entertainment, and for modern listeners it carries emotional resonances that cannot be escaped. But the most moving—the most spiritually moving, I'd say—performances are those that, like Mr. Westenburg's, are essentially buoyant while being, in the Passion sequence, intensely dramatic. Part I deals with the Prophecies, the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Adoration of the Shepherds; Part II with the Passion, the Resurrection, the Ascension, Pentecost, and the establishment of the Church. Part III is a Last Judgment that has lost its terrors, since death has been defeated, the Judge is on our side, and the very Prosecutor "makes intercession for us." There are episodes of mystery, awe, pain, tenderness, splendor, but in sum "Messiah" is a joyful piece. Handel himself associated it with Easter celebration; to Christmastide it is also appropriate. Handelians have long complained, and with justice, that the immense popularity of the work eclipsed a fuller knowledge of the composer's range and distorted the common view of him. What should they know of Handel who only the one oratorio know? In the long run, however, public opinion tends to be right—right in its assessments, although wrong in the narrowness of its pursuits. After the manifold and various adventures of this Handel tercentenary year, I found this Musica Sacra "Messiah" the most stirring adventure of them all.

Mr. Westenburg used a small, expert professional chorus of twenty-nine—eight sopranos, seven each of altos, tenors, and basses—and a basic band of nineteen strings, two oboes, and a single bassoon (plus trumpets and drums where called for), which he directed from the harpsichord, sharing the continuo role with an organist. It was hardly an "authentic" Handelian balance. Handel's timbre (after the strings-only Dublin version, with just one trumpet appearance) would have been reedier; at a Foundling Hospital "Messiah" in 1758, he had four oboes and four bassoons with twenty strings, a pair of horns doubling the trumpets, and a chorus of seventeen, with boy sopranos. (His soloists—there were six of them—probably joined in the choruses. The Musica Sacra soloists didn't, except in the "Hallelujah" Chorus.) But Fisher Hall is perhaps ten times the size of the Foundling Hospital chapel, and the Musica Sacra instruments are modern. This was not a "reconstruction," such as can successfully be attempted only in a small hall, but a sensitive re-creation with modern materials. Musica Sacra does "Messiah" each year, and each year—it's an inexhaustible work from many viewpoints—aims to do something new. Sometimes it's an unexpected textual choice from the score's many alternatives. This year, the principal innovation was long stretches of non-vibrato string playing. It's a modern trick—olde-worlde appliqué, not authentic Baroque practice. Sustained non-vibrato, by all the accounts, is as alien to eighteenth-century string playing as is "rich" modern vibrato. (A gentle, unobtrusive vibrato was cultivated, amplified at moments as an expressive ornament.) But it's a trick that works: Richard Bradshaw used it to electrifying effect for the death scene of the "Tamerlano" he conducted in Bloomington earlier this year. It drains the fatness from tense, modern, steel-strung violins. It enforces delicacy and care about intonation. (A cynic might add that by emphasizing any deviations from exact pitch it suggests the out-of-tune sound of some of our old-instrument bands; I'd rather not pursue that one.) To the *pifa* pastorale before "There were shepherds abiding in the field" it lent a rustic charm, suggesting the wheezy drone of the shepherds' pipes. And it lent plangency to the long notes of "And with his stripes we are healed," producing what Robert Donington (in his treatise "String Playing in Baroque Music") calls "some quite special and rather theatrical effect." It's a trick that loses its attractiveness if it's tried too often.

Handel divided the solo numbers among five or more singers when he performed "Messiah." Mr. Westenburg used just four. Sylvia McNair, the soprano, was a shade reticent in the Christmas sequence, a shade too well mannered. In "Rejoice greatly" she sacrificed the "r" and the "j"—likewise the "b" and the "h" of "Behold"—to smoothness. But she sang "I know that my redeemer liveth" fully, fervently, and fearlessly, with tone that glowed the brighter as it rose. This is a beautiful young voice. To the alto part Michael Chance brought clarity, intelligence, impeccably clear words, and well-formed tone. On the long E-flat of "grief," in "He was despised," he produced a wonderful *messa di voce* (a swelling of the tone from soft to loud and then a fining down to soft again). One looked forward to admiring it again in the da capo. Mr. Chance, an artist and stylist, did something different: he now hit the word hard, with strong attack on the "gr," and then slowly, with perfect control, keeping the vowel pure, he diminished the note until it disappeared in a whispered "f." Both times, differently each time, the word was given potent expression. (At the first "Messiah" performance, after Mrs. Cibber—who had emerged from retirement after a messy divorce case—sang "He was despised," the Reverend Dr. Delany rose to his feet and cried, "Woman, for this be all thy sins forgiven thee!")

David Gordon, the tenor, essayed some overambitious and disfiguring decoration in his first number, making plain places rough. But he sang the recitatives and airs of Part II with noble emotion, and was especially poignant in "Thy rebuke hath broken his heart" and "Behold, and see." David Evitts was a strong, agile bass with sharp-focussed coloratura. The chorus achieved grandeur without portentousness, lightness without frivolity, and all it did was vivid. In modern "Messiah"s, "All we like sheep have gone astray" sometimes sounds positively giddy and gleeful; in this performance—as light and fleet as any—there was a hint in the timbre of regret for the errancy. —ANDREW PORTER

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BOOKS

Evolution Be Praised

"EVOLUTION," writes Stephen Jay Gould in introducing his collection of essays "The Flamingo's Smile: Reflections in Natural History" (Norton; $17.95), "is one of the half-dozen shattering ideas that science has developed to overturn past hopes and assumptions, and to enlighten our current thoughts." Shattering, indeed. The non-scientist's relation to modern science is basically craven: we look to its discoveries and technology to save us from disease, to give us a faster ride and a softer life, and at the same time we shrink from what it has to tell us of our perilous and insignificant place in the cosmos. Not that threats to our safety and significance were absent from the pre-scientific world, or that arguments against a God-bestowed human grandeur were lacking before Darwin. But our century's revelations of unthinkable largeness and unimaginable smallness, of abysmal stretches of geological time when we were nothing, of supernumerary galaxies and indeterminate subatomic behavior, of a kind of mad mathematical violence at the heart of matter have scorched us deeper than we know. Giacometti's wire-thin, eroded figures body forth the new humanism, and Beckett's minimal monologuists provide its feeble, hopeless voice. Yet still we beg of science, "Talk to us," and honor with sales and celebrity those practicing scientists willing to condescend to the general reader and to entertain us with the astonishing facts, and even to share our atavistic awe and dread as the facts inexorably unfold. In recent years, the astronomer Carl Sagan has been the most conspicuous of American popularizers, but his relentless televised mooning after the stars, his tub-thumping for extraterrestrial life, and his willingness to extend his hyperactive speculative faculty into fields well beyond his own all lend his information a certain shine of vulgarity. Gould, his contemporary (and fellow-alumnus of the New York public schools), has contrived to write accessibly and amusingly of the natural sciences with no sacrifice of seriousness; he is the worthy successor, as naturalist and essayist, to Loren Eiseley. Gould is a less poetic writer than Eiseley, and hews closer to developments within paleontology and evolutionary theory; one suspects that he would consider "romantic" many of Eiseley's later, more brooding and personal essays, as well as the cheerful microbiological effusions of Dr. Lewis Thomas, whom Gould must have in mind when he writes, "Siphonophores do not convey the message—a favorite theme of unthinking romanticism—that nature is but one gigantic whole, all its parts intimately connected and interacting in some higher, ineffable harmony."

For over ten years now, Gould has been writing a monthly column, "This View of Life," for the magazine *Natural History*. "The Flamingo's Smile" is his fourth collection of (with some few other essays) these varied, vivacious columns. The three other collections are "Ever Since Darwin" (1977), "The Panda's Thumb" (1980), and "Hen's Teeth and Horse's Toes" (1983). All have contained roughly thirty essays, tidily grouped for consecutive reading; however, as the author points out, each collection has been longer than the last. He is not only writing more lengthily but, my faint impression is, more felicitously. Some of his earlier essays had a slangy, self-assertive tone and a tinge of the sensational—e.g., the essay, in "Hen's Teeth," speculating that the priest and philosopher Teilhard de Chardin assisted Charles Dawson in perpetrating the Piltdown hoax, paleontology's most notorious fraud. The tone of "The Flamingo's Smile" seems to be a mellowed one, more appreciative than assertive. A number of its essays sympathetically explicate retrospectively preposterous scientific theories and patiently explain how learned and honorable men could hold them. One extended piece, the hundredth column Gould has composed for *Natural History*, is fondly devoted to his pet object of research and field work, the Bahamian land snail *Cerion* ("I love *Cerion* with all my heart and intellect"). And a number of crusading excursions into human history attempt to rescue from the mistreatment of their own times such dwellers on the social margins as Saartjie Baartman, a southern African woman put on public display in early-nineteenth-century Europe as "the Hottentot Venus;" Carrie Buck, a Virginia woman whose legal sterilization, in the nineteen-twenties, was upheld in a decision by Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, famously pronouncing, "Three generations of imbeciles are enough;" and Ernest Everett Just, a brilliant black biologist who died in 1941, at the age of fifty-eight, after a career frustrated by racism at the highest academic levels. Gould has written much of this book while battling cancer, and, his preface states, "I write these essays primarily to aid my own quest to learn and understand as much as possible about nature in the short time allotted." To "the plodding regularity of these essays" he credits some of his will to live: "Who can surpass me in the good fortune they supply; every month is a new adventure—in learning and expression. I could only say with the most fierce resolution: 'Not yet Lord, not yet.' I could not dent the richness in a hundred lifetimes, but I simply must have a look at a few more of those pretty pebbles."

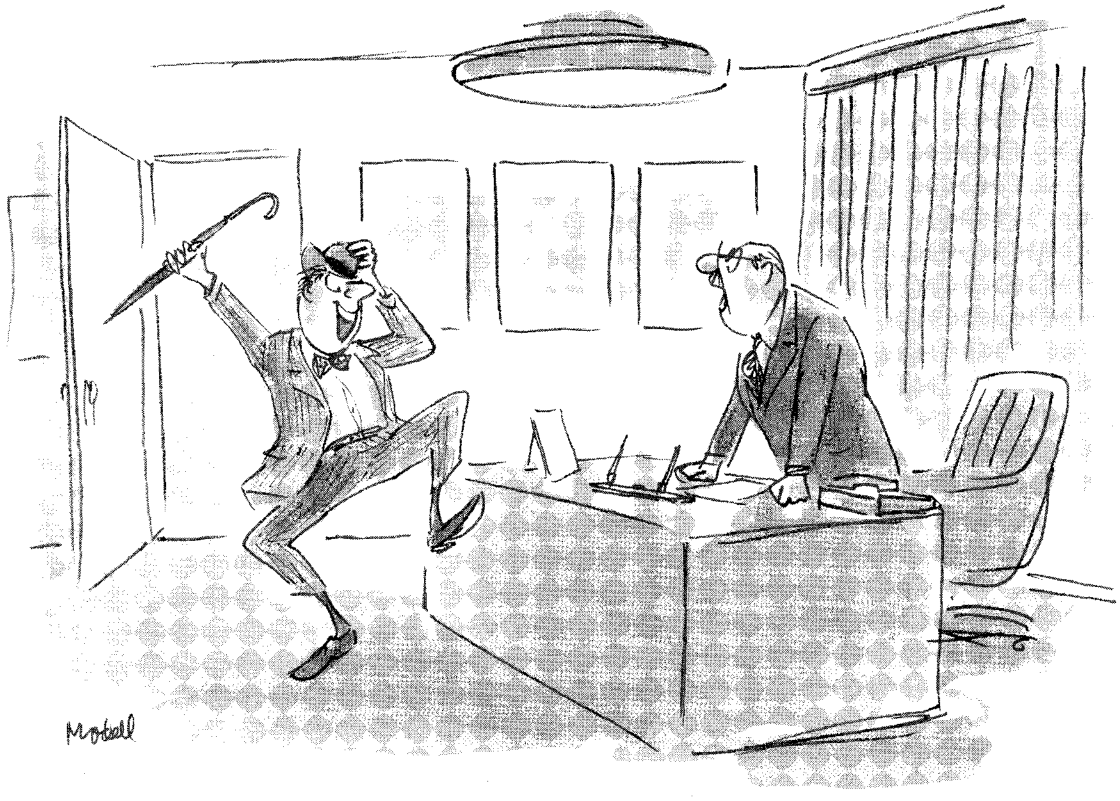
Gould's prose pebbles make addictive reading in part because of his unabashed enthusiasm for evolutionary theory, which "beautifully encompasses both the particulars that fascinate and the generalities that instruct." In "The Panda's Thumb," he explained, "[Evolutionary theory] is, in its current state of development, sufficiently firm to provide satisfaction and confidence, yet fruitfully undeveloped enough to provide a treasure trove of mysteries." His essays, far from being lecture notes recited out of a store of settled knowledge, have the fresh zeal of self-education. Footnotes cheerfully acknowledge demurs and amplifications that their magazine publication attracted. His titles are lively, even jazzy—"The Titular Bishop of Titiopolis," "Bathybius and Eozoon," "Death Before Birth, or a Mite's *Nunc Dimittis*," "Of Wasps and WASPs," "Hannah West's Left Shoulder and the Origin of Natural Selection"—and our interest is further piqued by the illustrations, which have often been fetched from their obscure source like a paleontological treasure in their own right. The pages on Carrie Buck, for instance, reproduce the first-grade report card of Carrie's daughter, Vivian, who was born just before her mother was sterilized (indeed, her birth prompted the sterilization) and who died at only the age of eight. The poor child, the third generation of alleged imbeciles, got A's in deportment and B's and C's in academic subjects. She even made the honor roll one term. The look of her homely, humble old report card cries out like a voice. Mr. Gould has a salutary ethical feel for the actual detail, the exact quotation. He firmly lets us know, "All these essays are based on original sources in their original languages: none are direct reports from texts and other popular summaries." Not only a historian of life, he teaches the history of science at Harvard, and is never more interesting (or ingratiating) than when he delves up some long-buried theory, dusts off its key paragraphs, and makes it, as it were, still tick. Philip Henry Gosse, in his "Omphalos" (1857), argued that God had loaded the geological strata with "prochronic" indications of time spans older than the Biblical Creation so as not to violate the cyclical integrity of natural processes, just as He fashioned animals with feces already in their intestines. The Reverend William Buckland (1784-1856) argued that the gravel and loam deposits found throughout England were evidence of Noah's Flood, but he had the grace and scientific wisdom eventually to see that they were in fact evidence of glacial ice sheets. The German Lorenz Oken and the British William Swainson, in the decades just before Darwin's "Origin of Species" (1859), propounded grandly fallacious taxonomic systems based, with cabalistic intricacy, upon the number five. These mistaken theorists were all excellent descriptive naturalists; but, until Darwin took the not unknown principle of natural selection (it had been expressed in 1831 by the Scots fruit-grower Patrick Matthew, in an obscure work called "Naval Timber and Arboriculture," and even earlier by another Scotsman, William Charles Wells, in a posthumously published paper on skin coloration) and showed this fortuitous mechanism to be the creative force transforming organisms in the vastness of geological time, the nineteenth century was one of accumulating heaps of evidence being shuffled about along anthropocentric and quasi-theological lines. God the Master Mechanic died slow, with many a confusing deathbed word.

Gould's evangelical sense of science as an advancing light gives him a vivid sympathy with thinkers in the dark. The great Lord Kelvin, the discoverer of the second law of thermodynamics, for forty years held out for ages of the earth and sun too brief to allow organic evolution by natural selection; but then how could anyone calculate the sun's thermal life before the discovery of radioactivity and nuclear fusion? How could the energetic debates over embryology carried on in eighteenth-century France, by such savants as Pierre-Louis Moreau de Maupertuis, be less than grotesquely simpleminded two centuries before DNA was analyzed, and fifty years before the Jacquard loom offered the first analogous instance of programmed instructions? Science not only produces technology but must wait upon it. We forget how tangled things looked to those who first tried to sort them out; as the record of the strata emerged, catastrophism (which is now having a revival of sorts) was the logical conclusion to reach, as Gould has pointed out in an essay on Georges Cuvier:

> In the great debates of early-nineteenth-century geology, catastrophists followed the stereotypical method of objective science—empirical literalism. They believed what they saw, interpolated nothing, and read the record of the rocks directly. This record, read literally, is one of discontinuity and abrupt transition: faunas disappear; terrestrial rocks lie under marine rocks with no recorded transitional environments between; horizontal sediments overlie twisted and fractured strata of an earlier age.

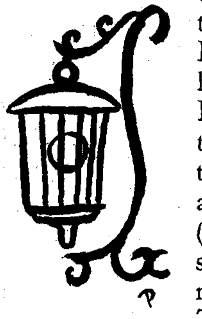
Gould chastens us ungrateful beneficiaries of science with his affectionate and tactile sense of its strenuous progress, its worming forward through fragmentary revelations and obsolete debates, from relative darkness into relative light. Even those who were wrong win his gratitude.

In a day of perhaps excessively professional and instrumentalized research, Gould loves with the ardor of a boyish amateur the dispassionate scientific method. This method, he keeps insisting, must be resolutely non-mystical and isolated from human wishful thinking—what he several times calls "hope." "Always be suspicious of conclusions that reinforce uncritical hope and follow comforting traditions of Western thought," he writes in a discussion of the "anthropic principle," which is a new name for the venerable human idea that things must have



"Never mind the song and dance, Higgins. What about the Atkins account?"

been designed for us, since we are here. It has taken new life lately from the realization of what extremely fine balances were apparently struck among the fundamental physical forces to provide a universe as stable and locally congenial as it is; but an earlier version was advanced in 1903 by Alfred Russel Wallace, who ranks alongside Darwin in the discovery of natural selection but who later drifted, unlike the ever-empirical Darwin, into spiritualism and anthropocentricism. Wallace, working with turn-of-the-century astronomy, demonstrated to his own satisfaction that "the marvellous complexity of forces which appear to control matter, if not actually to constitute it, are and must be mind-products." Mark Twain ridiculed Wallace's thesis ("According to these figures, it took 99,968,000 years to prepare the world for man, impatient as the Creator doubtless was to see him and admire him"), and Gould tartly says of it, "I, for one, will seek my hope elsewhere." He does not say where, unless it be in the hopefulness of ever-newer scientific ideas. Though a devout disciple of Darwin, he is no slave to the gradualism that Darwin conceived to be the pace of adaptation and that makes the larger steps of evolution very hard to picture. Gould has written on, and contributed a new introduction to, the geneticist Richard Goldschmidt's controversial "The Material Basis of Evolution" (1940), which argues that though Darwin's gradualism satisfactorily accounts for, say, the prevalence of white rabbits in snow country, the large mutations can be explained only by the hypothesis of the "hopeful monster"—the rare freak whose malformation has a survival value and who finds (here's a rub) another hopeful monster to mate with. Gould has offered, as a way of coping with the embarrassments of discontinuity in the paleontological record, a theory of "punctuated equilibria" that has, to his annoyance, given some comfort to creationists. As the last essays in "The Flamingo's Smile" show, he is considerably excited by the recent so-called Nemesis hypothesis, which holds that mass extinctions have been caused every twenty-six million years by the return of a star that comes close enough to the solar system to stir up the Oort cloud of comets and thus precipitate collisions and climate-altering dust storms on Earth. This might be called catastrophism with a heavenly face.



As he sifts through biological riddles, however, whether in the fossil record (conodonts, the banana-shaped *Tullimonstrum*, the pre-Cambrian Ediacaran fauna) or the living world (sexual cannibalism among insects, sequential hermaphroditism in *Crepidula*, identity problems in Siamese twins and Portuguese men-of-war), or fends off cladists and creationists, advocates of eugenics and of the anthropic principle, Gould has Darwin's example ever before him. He has read the books Darwin wrote in addition to the two notorious ones, "On the Origin of Species" and "The Descent of Man" (1871), and has written separate essays on "The Formation of Vegetable Mould, Through the Action of Worms, with Observations on Their Habits" (1881) and "On the Various Contrivances by Which British and Foreign Orchids Are Fertilized by Insects" (1862). Patience and scrupulous observation are as important to the naturalist as worms and pollination are to nature; Darwin's slowness to generalize and the detailed concreteness with which he substantiated his generalizations are of a piece with his unique powers of insight into the workings of nature. The proper observer must not be hasty to impose order, or demand too much neatness of nature. Gould frequently delights in nature's intricate dishevelment, in the waywardness of adaptation:

> Our world is not an optimal place, fine tuned by omnipotent forces of selection. It is a quirky mass of imperfections, working well enough (often admirably); a jury-rigged set of adaptations built of curious parts made available by past histories in different contexts. Darwin, who was a keen student of history, not just a devotee of selection, understood this principle as the primary proof of evolution itself.

The word "evolution," with its connotation of unrolling, of progressive development, was not favored by Darwin; he preferred the bleak phrase "descent with modification" for his theory. The pure fortuitousness and physicality of nature's workings must not be polluted, Gould reaffirms, by human thought habits or wishful thinking. "The human mind delights in finding pattern—so much so that we often mistake coincidence or forced analogy for profound meaning. No other habit of thought lies so deeply within the soul of a small creature trying to make sense of a complex world not constructed for it." To lock out old notions of divine planning and human singularity, the notions of randomness and fortuity and contingency are stressed as if themselves sacred: "Random processes do produce high degrees of order—and the existence of pattern is no argument against randomness." "Evolution," Gould stated with relish in the prologue to his first collection, "is purposeless, nonprogressive, and materialistic." In the essay upon Darwin's worm studies, he cited as exemplary "the materialistic character of Darwin's theory, particularly his denial of any causal role to spiritual forces, energies, or powers." Even such a mild, almost furtive suggestion of the supernatural as vitalism's hint that there exists in life a "spark" or "special something" must be rejected—even the plausible notion that *Homo sapiens*' high intelligence caps an evolutionary trend. "Human brains and bodies did not evolve along a direct and inevitable ladder, but by a circuitous and tortuous route carved by adaptations evolved for different reasons, and fortunately suited to later needs."

Mammals developed in size and capability because, in large part, the dinosaurs died out. But, one wonders, might not reptiles have developed superior intelligences? Gould's own essay "Were Dinosaurs Dumb?" gives examples of small, flesh-eating, necessarily quick and agile dinosaurs, such as *Stenonychosaurus*, tending in this direction. Is not intelligence so formidable a weapon for survival as to develop inevitably? In the sea, are not the cetaceans—the whales, the porpoises, and the dolphins—its newest considerable citizens and also its brightest? Gould does not entertain these questions, asserting instead that "conscious intelligence has evolved only once on earth, and presents no real prospect for reëmergence should we choose to use our gift for destruction." This closed outlook comes oddly from the man who marvelled at how the panda, needing a thumb to grip his bamboo shoots, evolved one from a wristbone, and who describes how flight has evolved four times on earth, the wing derived each time from different body elements. Gould regards human intelligence as in the same class—ornately evolved oddity—as the flamingo's upside-down beak that gives him his title. Our brains are a kind of unintended smile on the surface of the *bellum omnium contra omnes*—the war of all against all, as Marx called Darwin's nature. A stark view, but a lucid and, it would seem, an invigorating one. As a constant writer (who has not in ten years, he tells us, missed a deadline), Stephen Gould is fortunate to possess an approach and a theme that cast an animating light upon such a wide variety of facts and texts. He is additionally fortunate in having, in Darwin, a hero.

—John Updike

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

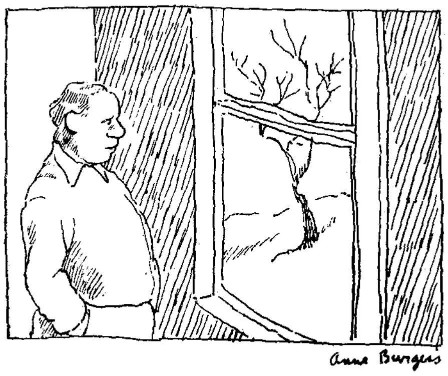
City of Glass, by Paul Auster (Sun & Moon; $13.95). An ingenious story, set in Manhattan (the first volume in a "New York Trilogy"), about a pseudonymous writer of detective stories who lets himself be mistaken for a real detective, named Paul Auster, in a case that features a madman with some dangerous ideas about the nature of names. As the story begins, the madman, who has been institutionalized for thirteen years for keeping his son isolated for nine (in the hope that he would thereby speak God's language), is about to be sprung; the writer, at the request of the son's wife, agrees to shadow him. Eventually, he will introduce himself to the one Paul Auster in the telephone directory, only to find that he is a writer with an ingenious theory about who wrote "Don Quixote," and why. The story ends sadly after several long talks, one long walk, a long excerpt from the ersatz detective's notes, some meaningful busy signals, and just enough action to keep the reader reading. Paul Auster—the really real Paul Auster—has written four volumes of poems and three of prose under his own name, and one detective novel pseudonymously.

Coup d'État, by John Harvey (Atheneum; $16.95). "*Tst*"—"no," and then some—is all the Greek the reader need know to understand this solemn novel's stubborn hero, a lawyer imprisoned shortly after the colonels' coup of 1967. He is married to a stubborn woman, and they are friends of an English journalist who has good reason, before long, not to want the lawyer released. Meanwhile, the woman's brother-in-law, an ambitious businessman, has his ear to the ground and learns when and where to whisper "oil," "Turkey," "the Great Idea," and "Greater Greece." John Harvey, an English novelist and the author of "Victorian Novelists and Their Illustrators," too often resorts to caricature—the whole junta seems to be red-faced and potbellied, while prison improves the hero's physique—but he also provides some vivid pictures of the paradoxes that define Greece: a Macedonian goatherd, for instance, overlooking a vast field of weaponry heading east.

Joe Jones, by Anne Lamott (North Point; $15.50). A disappointing, dithery novel set in and around a restaurant near the Golden Gate Bridge. A neurotic earth mother is the restaurant's cook, a neurotic sometime bartender, Joe Jones, is her ex-lover, a neurotic young pastry chef is her best friend, and his slightly senile grandmother is the restaurant's owner. "Like some odd daycare center" is how a bird-boned, high-heeled, neurotic science teacher, a newcomer, describes the place; she may be dying of something insidious, and the cook has taken her under her wing. The plot, spanning a few months, identifies about a dozen species of love and loss, but the lovers and losers are too dizzy to inspire in anyone except themselves anything but exasperation. Anne Lamott manages some good, simple sketches of the bay's bird life; in "Rosie," her 1983 novel about a savvy kid and her shaky mother, she managed a good deal more.

GENERAL

Wittgenstein, by A. J. Ayer (Random House; $17.95). A short, clear, by no means uncritical study. A. J. Ayer opens with an account of the life of Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) and then discusses his works chronologically, starting with the "Tractatus," of 1922—the only book of Wittgenstein's published in his lifetime. He describes Wittgenstein's contributions to the problems of logic that so absorbed Bertrand Russell; like other philosophers of this century, including Ayer, Wittgenstein was caught up in the search for the indisputable or the irrefutable, but he never succeeded in overcoming doubt about such questions as whether one can prove the reality of others and their feelings. Ayer is unsympathetic to Wittgenstein's efforts to create a category for magic and religion which he called "important nonsense"—subjects not provable in philosophical discourse. He thinks that the later Wittgenstein showed resemblances to the pragmatists, and that his last works approach today's irrealists, who conceive of possible systems. "In the main I have found myself resisting Wittgenstein's arguments, and am correspondingly disinclined to acquiesce in the limitations which he sought to impose upon philosophy," Ayer concludes. "This does not detract from my appreciation of his brilliance and originality."



The Unfinished Journey: America Since World War II, by William H. Chafe (Oxford; $24.95). The word "unfinished" refers not only to the fact that American history is not over but to the author's conviction that there remains a good deal to be done in the way of attaining a juster and more egalitarian society. His earlier works have dealt with the civil-rights and women's-rights movements, and those subjects are the book's strong points. Other themes are less sure: in his effort to be judicious about the onset of the Cold War, Mr. Chafe is more scathing about Harry Truman's personality than about Stalin's; and in discussing the Red scare of the fifties he does not sufficiently distinguish between commercial cowardice (when films, television, and radio blacklisted entertainers) and realistic disillusionment (when unions discovered that the Communists used them for non-union purposes). His portrait of Lyndon Johnson could scarcely be bettered, though, and it is a real triumph to get that almost incomprehensible personality into the compass of this useful survey.

The Other Side of the Moon: The Life of David Niven, by Sheridan Morley (Harper & Row; $18.95). Mr. Morley, a critic and biographer, and the son of an acting family (his father is Robert Morley, and a grandmother was Gladys Cooper), discovered that even

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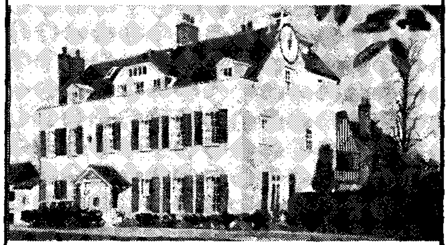

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though his subject had written two best-selling autobiographies, "The Moon's a Balloon" and "Bring on the Empty Horses," there was room for a third-person life, because Niven's books, like his public personality, were acts designed to entertain, and to conceal sorrows, uncertainties, and complexities. The Niven whom Mr. Morley chronicles is all contradiction. A rebel in public school and in the British Army, he nonetheless, in 1939, abandoned his Hollywood career to volunteer for the British armed forces. He was a womanizer and a dedicated family man, and he has been described by some colleagues as ambitious, canny, stingy, and snobbish and by others as extremely thoughtful, modest about his talents, and wholly without shrewdness in shaping his career. Everyone agrees that Niven had charm. Besides portraying a man bewilderingly capricious and steady, impulsive and loyal, Mr. Morley offers a fine sense of period. He is astute, for example, in showing how Hollywood used English actors in the thirties to perpetuate a fantasy Great Britain, whose quaintness and glamour bore no resemblance to the nation that became our ally in war.

Tokyo: The City at the End of the World, by Peter Popham (Kodansha; $15.95). The tour begins at a "body-sonic" coffee shop (the sound system is channelled through the chairs), then goes down a ten-lane avenue, past the Aix-en-Provence Gourmet Vegetable and Fruit Store, and turns left into a nine-foot-wide alley. Tokyo, routinely razed by earthquakes and architects, is a megalopolis of twenty-eight million nomads—instead of living here or there, they live more or less far from somewhere else—and its buildings meet their nomadic needs: hotel rooms the size of space capsules, say, and forty-nine bars stacked eight stories high. Tokyoites' appreciation of seasonal ephemera is the key to this "cornucopia of architectural kitsch," and to the author's affection for it. He suggests that Japan exported the idea of modular asymmetry, which is important to modern architecture, and that Westerners who think Tokyo looks too Western should think again.

Dr. Johnson by Mrs. Thrale: The "Anecdotes" of Mrs. Piozzi in Their Original Form, edited by Richard Ingrams (Chatto & Windus/Hogarth; $15.95). In 1784, after three years of widowhood, Hester Thrale, in spite of much public criticism, married an Italian musician named Piozzi. Three months later, Samuel Johnson, who had made her his confidante almost twenty years before, died. In 1786, she published "Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson," much of it derived from her voluminous diaries. In a preface Richard Ingrams explains that in culling quotations from "these fat tomes" Mrs. Thrale translated "Johnson's simple monosyllabic words—many of which she had written down almost on the spot—into Johnsonese." Mr. Ingrams has gone back to the diaries to compose this beautiful little book, which is enhanced by apt engravings and by first-rate footnotes. While preserving Mrs. Thrale's punctuation ("or rather lack of it"), he has restored her original rendition of Johnson's vivid, often funny language. On one page, three ladies are likened to "a Honeycomb," "sour Small beer," and "a dead Nettle." On another, Mr. and Mrs. Pepys are pictured as "a Perigord Pye" and "Boil'd Whiting." When a Mrs. Langton "shewed him her Grotto, & asked if he did not think it a pretty convenient habitation?—Yes Madam replied he—for a Toad."

MYSTERY AND CRIME

New Hope for the Dead, by Charles Willeford (St. Martin's; $14.95). A welcome second installment in the amply eventful life of the Miami homicide detective Sergeant Hoke Moseley. The events include a murder by sledgehammer, a murder by icepick, and a puzzling death by heroin overdose. But there are others: Hoke's ex-wife presents him with their two teen-age daughters for nurturing; Hoke's partner, Ellita Sanchez, becomes pregnant; and, most important and most interesting, Hoke (to hold his city job) must find a suitable apartment within the municipal limits. This, like its predecessor, "Miami Blues," is pure pleasure.

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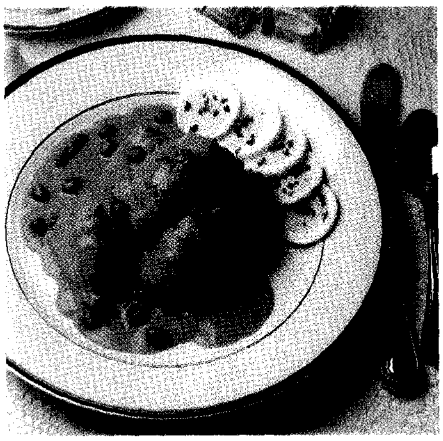
PLUS ÇA CHANGE DEPARTMENT

[*From the Minneapolis Star & Tribune*]

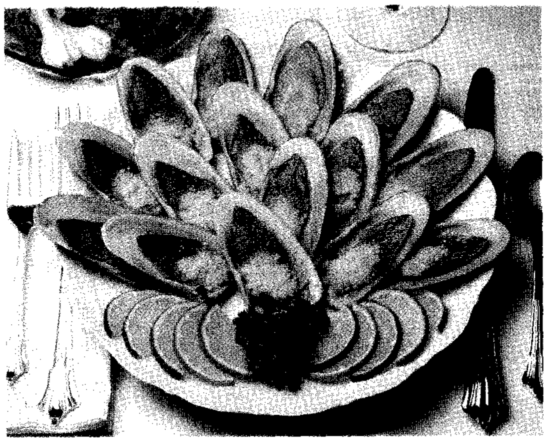
Paris, France

French phone service, notorious for its inefficiency, has been seized by a technological revolution. Friday night, a flip was switched and—Voila!—all 24 million numbers had eight digits and no area code.

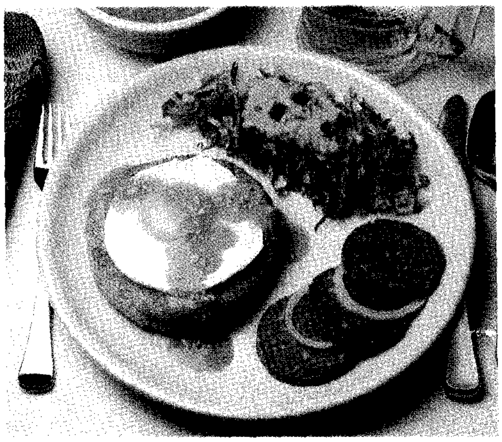
THIS VACATION COMES WITH A NEW SET OF DISHES.



Picante de Ave. Boned chicken with paprika sauce.



Machas a la Parmesana. Pacific clams with white wine and cheese.



Yapingachos. Cheese-filled potato tortilla with egg and peanut sauce.

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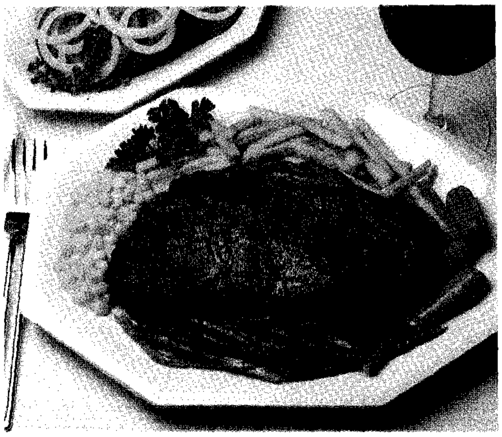
Langosta del Pacífico. Pacific lobster with mayonnaise.

Ajiaco. Chicken stew with potato, corn and capers.



Bife de Chorizo. Broiled Argentine beef served with Chimichurri sauce. (Parsley, garlic and oil.)

In South America, the local cuisines are as fascinating to explore as the local scenery.

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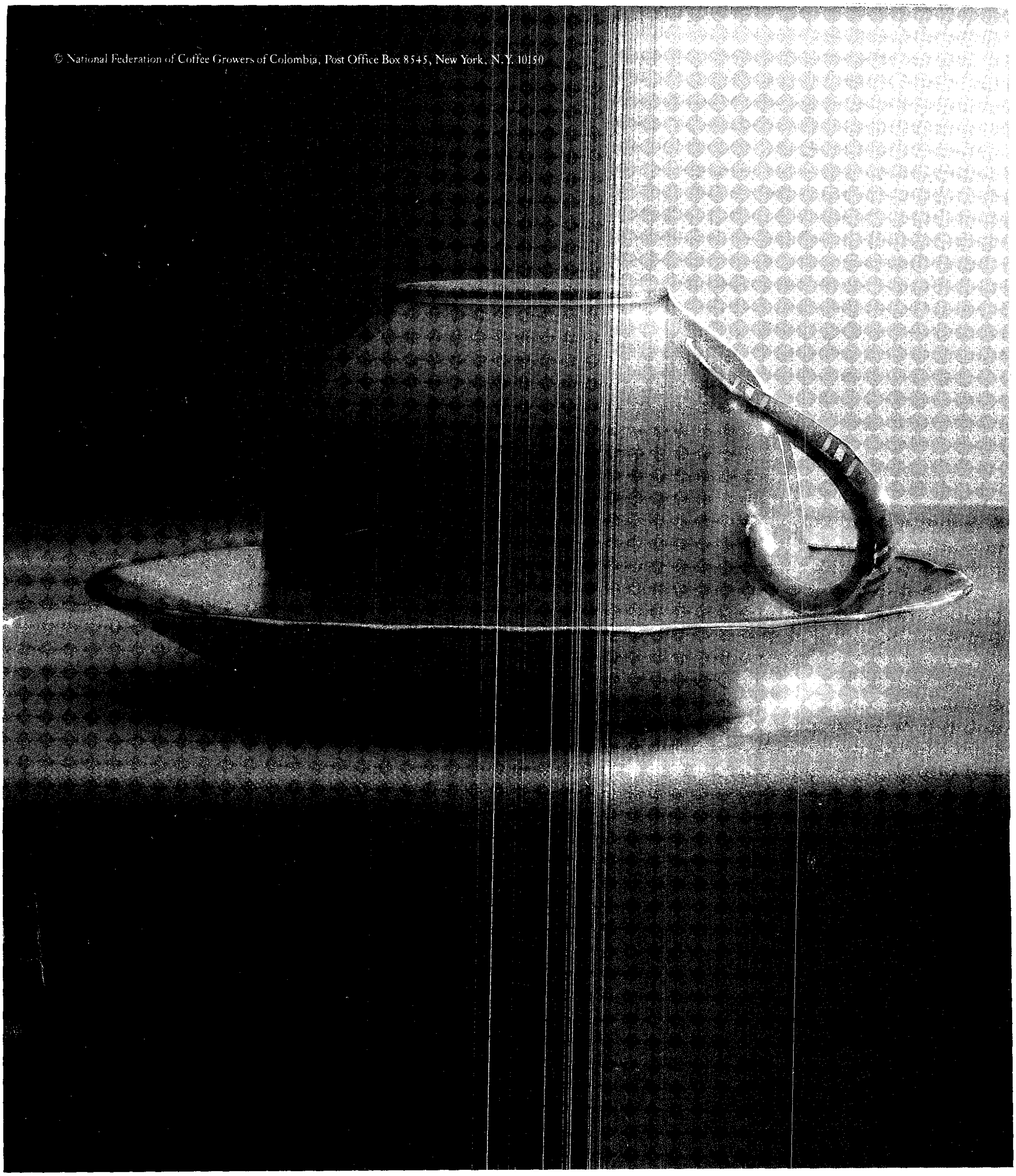
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